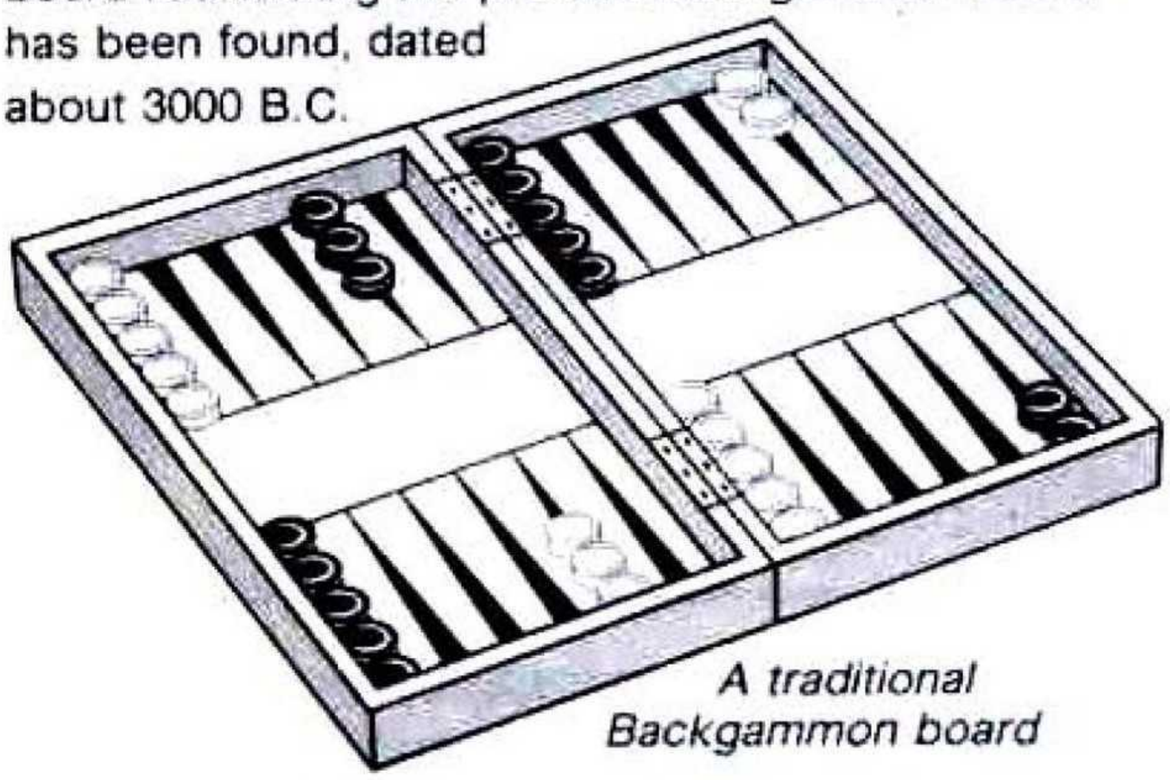
PHILIPS VIDEOPAC

BACKGAMMON

NL/I

Backgammon

Backgammon is a very ancient board game. We find a reference to the game in one of the works of Plato, the Greek philosopher, who lived from 427 to 347 B.C. However, the game is much older than that. A board resembling the present Backgammon board has been found, dated about 3000 B.C.



A traditional Backgammon board

Backgammon today is played by millions all over the world. Its appeal is mainly due to the fact that Backgammon offers a unique combination of luck and skill.

The basic rules

For those who are not yet familiar with the game, we will give a condensed resumé of the basic rules. You will find ample literature on the game and its strategy in any good book store.

Backgammon is played on a special board with 15 checkers (also referred to as "stones", "counters" or "men"). The original board was marked by twelve parallel lines. In the course of history, however, these lines have been replaced by "points", as the illustration of an original, modern Backgammon board clearly shows.

For purely technical reasons, Videopac Backgammon has returned to the original form. The "points" have been replaced by rectangular spaces.
In most cases, the checkers will be black and white. For the Videopac version the colours green and white are used.

For the convenience of newcomers to the game we will use Videopac images of the board when we explain the basic rules of the game. The experienced player will have no problem recognizing the images and actions.

A suggestion:
We suggest that you let Videopac give you an explanation all by itself

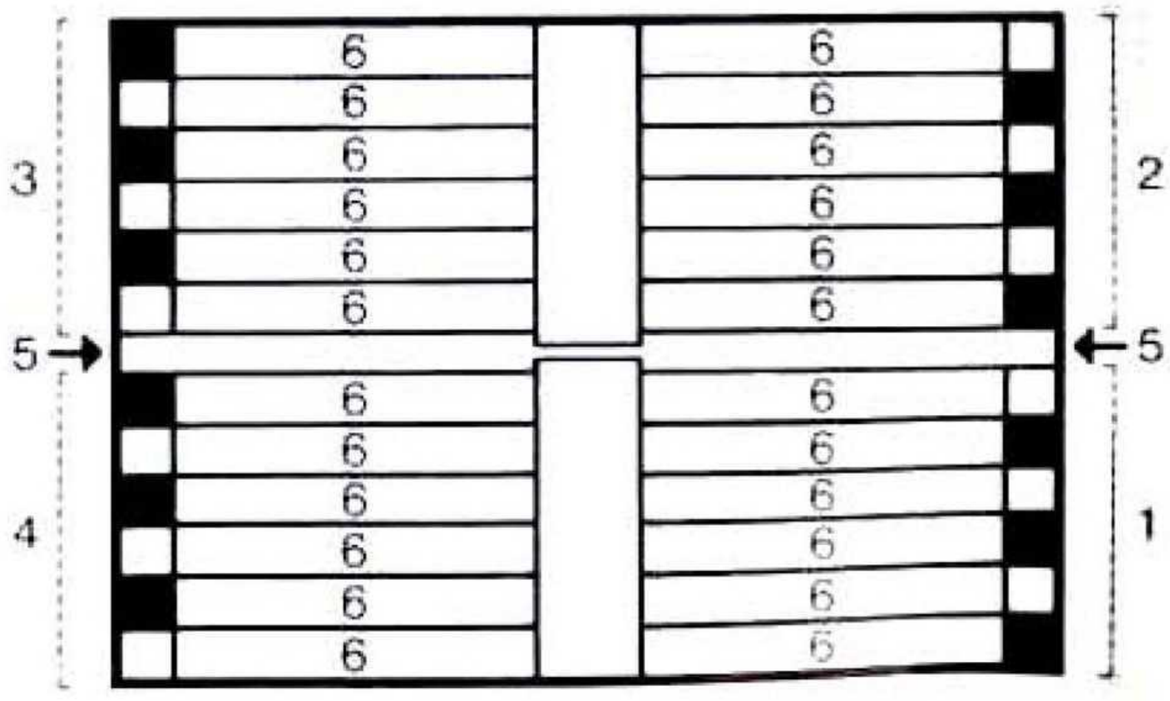
- Insert the cartridge into your game computer
- First press [RESET]
- Next press [6]
- Finally press [NO]

The computer will give you a fascinating demonstration! You may want to watch it for a while before you continue reading!

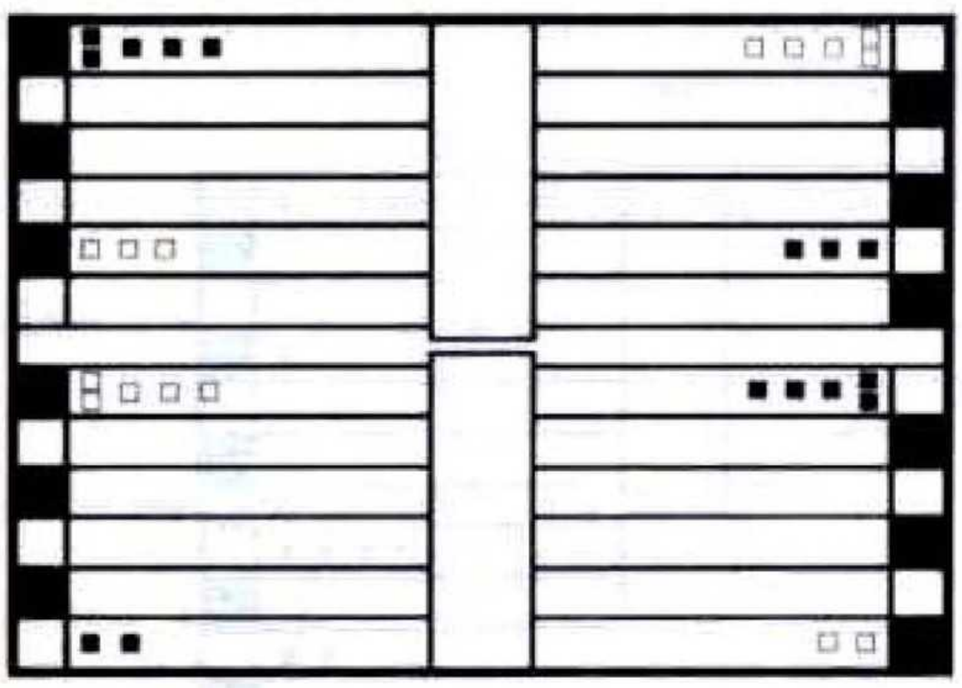
The board

Again for purely technical reason, the Videopac board has been turned through 90°.

1 Home (or "inner") board for Green
2 Outer board for Green
3 Outer board for White
4 Home board for White
5 The "bar"
6 The "points"



The checkers
Each player has fifteen checkers. This diagram shows the starting position of the checkers. The green checkers are drawn in black, the white checkers as white.



Both players move their checkers around the board, towards their own home board. This means that the white checkers move anti-clockwise, while the green checkers move clockwise around the board.

The greatest distance to cover on the board is 23 points. One step for each point and another step from the outer board of the opponent to your own outer board.

The object of the game
The object for both players is to try and move their checkers off the board as quickly as possible.

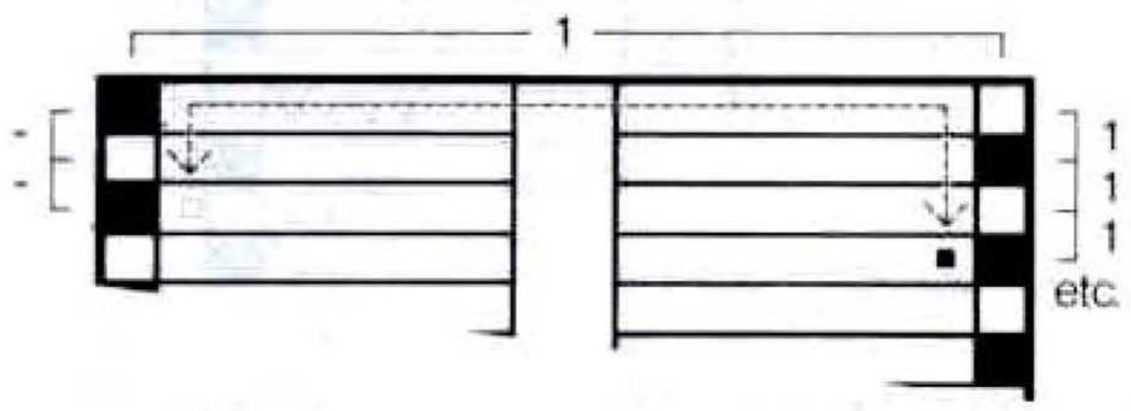
The player who succeeds first, wins the game.

Rolling the dice
Players take turns rolling two dice and making their moves according to the number rolled.

If a player rolls a double, the number he has rolled counts four times rather than just twice.

To determine which player is to make the opening move, both players first roll one die only. The player with the highest number has the privilege of making the first moves of the game. He has to do that by using the number he has just rolled, plus the number rolled by his opponent. If both players have rolled the same number, they have to roll again.

Moving the checkers
The dice determine the number of "points" the checkers can be moved. One step for each pip on the dice and one step (pip) to move your checker from the outer board of your opponent to your own.



In this example the green checker has been moved six steps.

There are a number of important rules when it comes to moving your checkers:

- When a player has rolled his dice, he is obliged to move his checkers according to the exact numbers he has rolled with his dice.

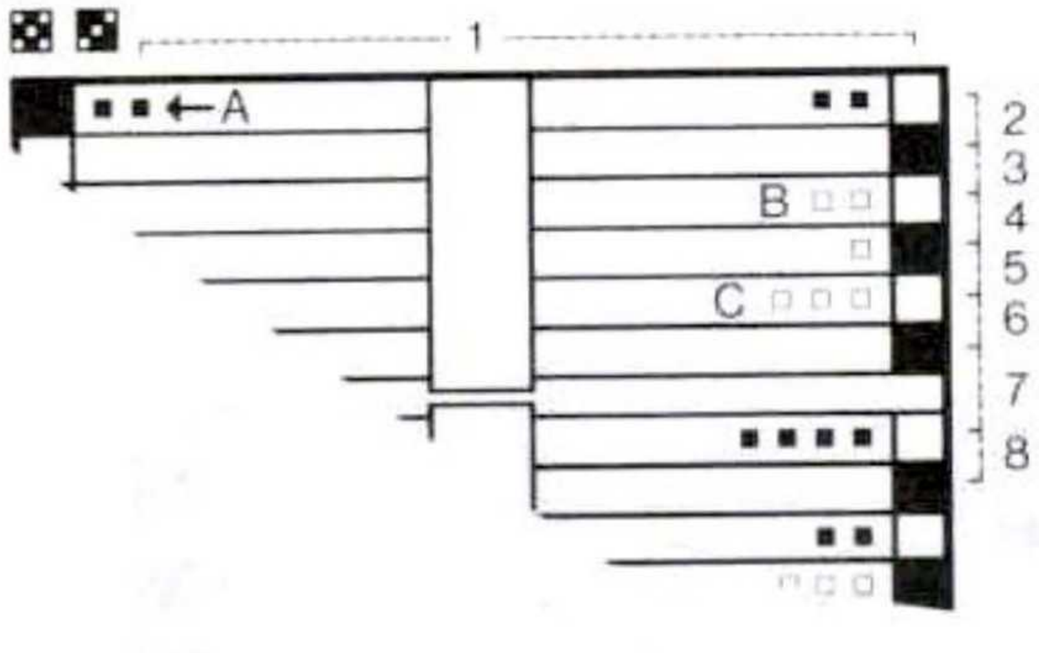
- Each number rolled with a die constitutes one move.

- The moves can be made with two different checkers or with one. In the latter case, however, two moves have to be made and completed. Rolling 5 and 3 for instance, a checker cannot make one move of eight steps but has to make two moves (5 and 3).

- A checker can land on an open point, or on a point already occupied by one or more of his own checkers.

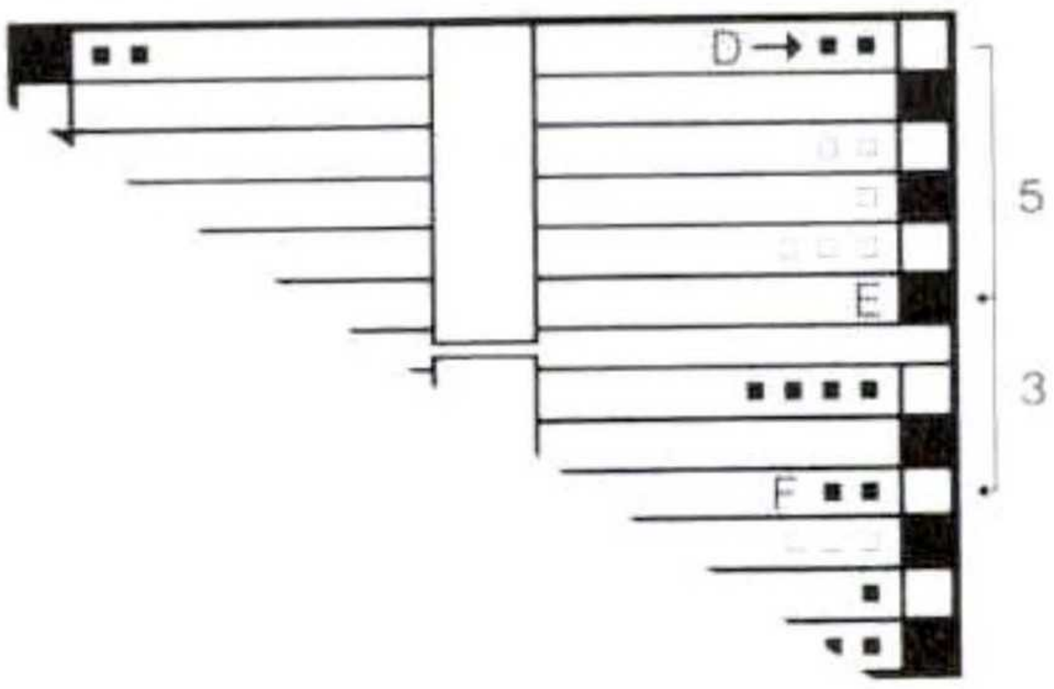
- A checker cannot land on a point that is occupied by two or more opposing checkers. He can, however, pass such a point en route to his destination

Examples (see diagram)
Green has rolled 5 and 3.



- Checker "A" cannot be moved since the points marked "B" and "C" are occupied by 2 and 3 opposing checkers respectively, so there is no room for an intermediate landing.

- Looking at the same situation again, checker "D" can be moved since point "E" is still free, while point "F" is already occupied by two green checkers.

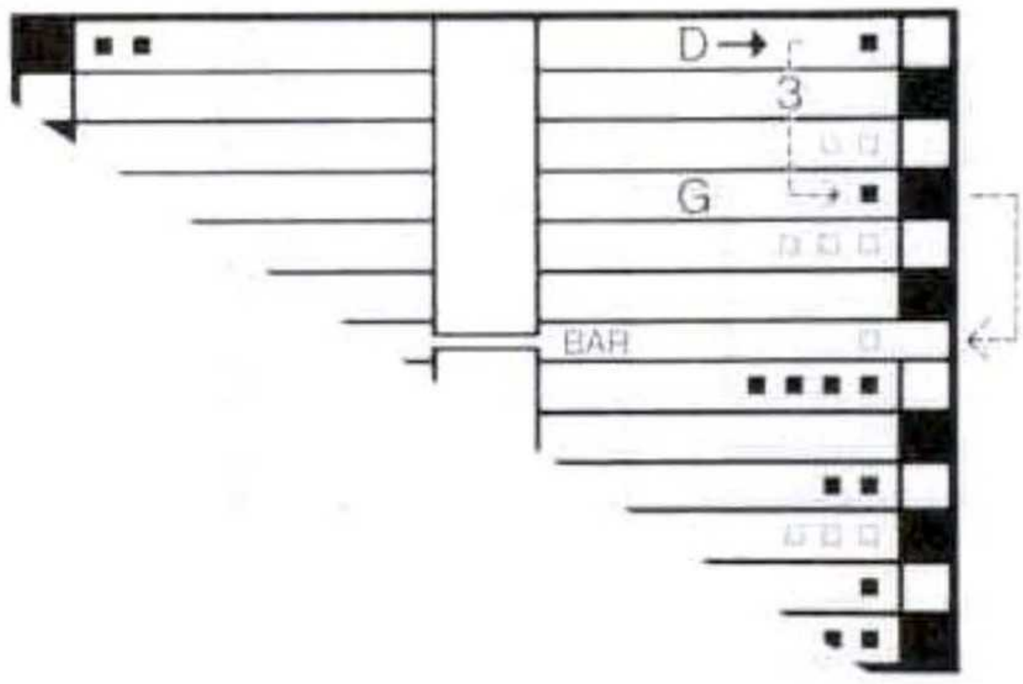


A player can only move his checkers when he has all checkers on the board, excepting checkers that have been "borne off".

Hitting an opposing checker
A player can hit an opposing checker with one of his own when he can reach a point occupied by one opposing checker (a "blot"), when completing a move.

Example
Taking the same situation again, as an example, checker "D" can hit the opposing checker (marked "G"), since it is a "blot" and Green can reach that point, having rolled a 3.

When a checker is hit, it is transferred to the bar and thus taken out of a play.

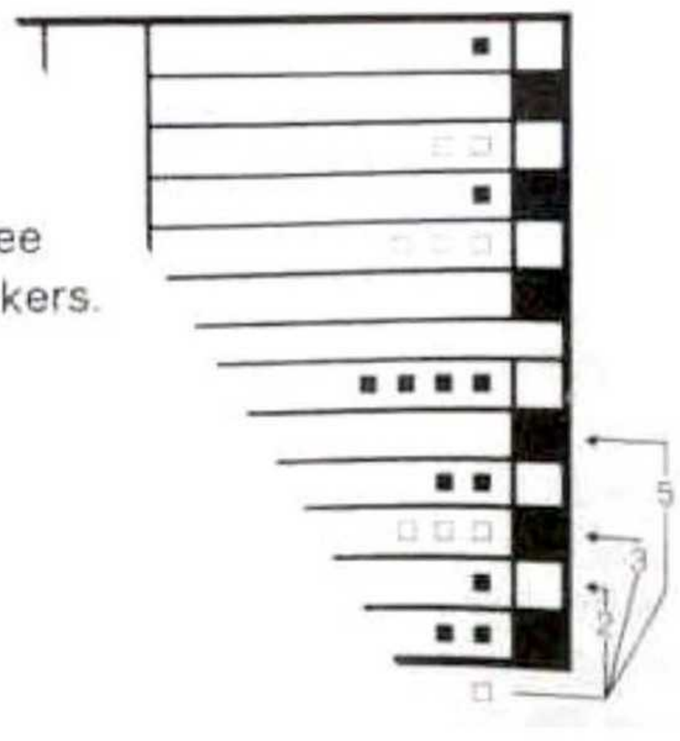


Re-entering a checker
A player cannot resume playing as long as one of his checkers is on the bar. It has to be "re-entered" first.

A checker can only be re-entered when a player rolls the exact number required to reach an unoccupied point or a "blot" (a point occupied by one opposing checker only) or by one or more of his own checkers.

Example
Returning to our example (see above), White can re-enter his checker when he rolls:

2 in which case he hits a green checker.
3 the point is occupied by three of his own checkers.
5 the point is still unoccupied.



Bearing off
When a player has all his checkers on his home board, he can start bearing them off.

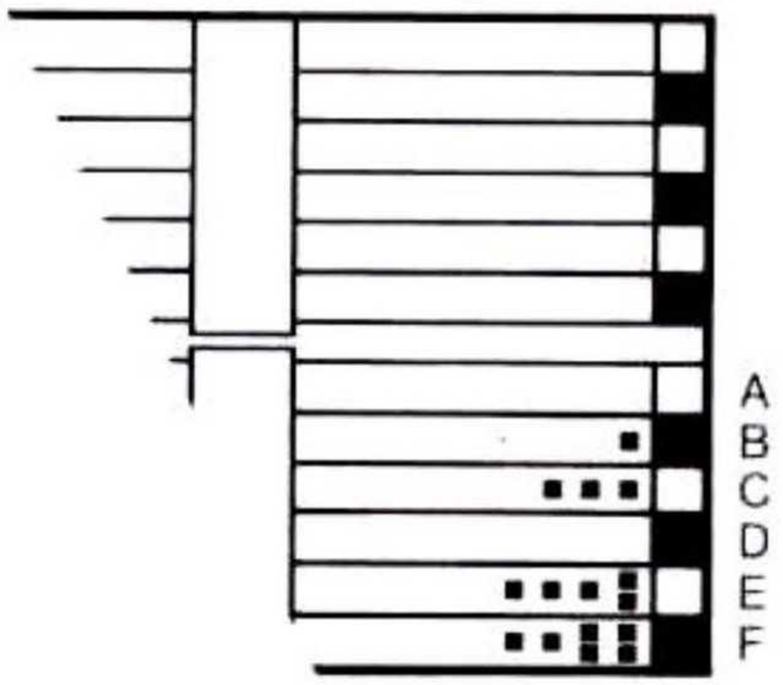
A player needs, in principle at least, the exact number required to bear a checker off.

If he rolls a number higher than the maximum number required to bear one of his checkers off, he may take the checker furthest away from the base line.

Example
All fifteen checkers are on the green home board.

- **Green rolls 5 and 3:**
  He can bear off one checker from point B.
  Next he can move one checker from point C to point F.

- **Green rolls 6 and 2:**
  He can bear off the checker from point B and one from point E.



The winner
The winner is the player who succeeds in bearing off all his checkers first, ahead of the other player.

Scoring points
A straight win is awarded with 1 point.

If, however, a player succeeds in bearing off all his checkers before his opponent has borne off his first checker, the winning player is awarded 2 points. This is called a "Gammon".

If a player wins a game while his opponent still has one or more checkers on the winner's home board, the winner is awarded 3 points. This is referred to as a "Backgammon".

Doubling and re-doubling
If a player feels he is in a good position to win the game, which in fact is hard to tell since chances may turn very unexpectedly, he can challenge his opponent for a double. If the opponent accepts, it means that the number of points awarded for the game will be multiplied by two.

If the player does not enter into the challenge, he passes and has lost the game.

If a player accepts a doubling challenge, it gives him the exclusive privilege to re-double (end score x 4).

Having accepted a re-double challenge, the opponent has acquired the right to re-double again (end-score x 8), etc.

A Backgammon match
A Backgammon match is usually played on the basis of an agreed number of points. The player who reaches or exceeds that number of points first is winner of the match.

Videopac Backgammon

A game cartridge that offers you a wide range of possibilities:

For two players

- Match Backgammon with pip counter — see page 5
  Here you will find the basic instructions as they apply to all variations of the game.
- Match Backgammon without pip counter — see page 15
- Competitive Backgammon with pip counter — see page 15
- Competitive Backgammon without pip counter — see page 15

For one player, playing against the computer

- Match Backgammon with pip counter — see page 16
- Match Backgammon without pip counter — see page 16
- Competitive Backgammon with pip counter — see page 16
- Competitive Backgammon without pip counter — see page 16

"Dutch" Backgammon — see page 16

Using hand dice — see page 13

Setting up a given starting position — see page 14

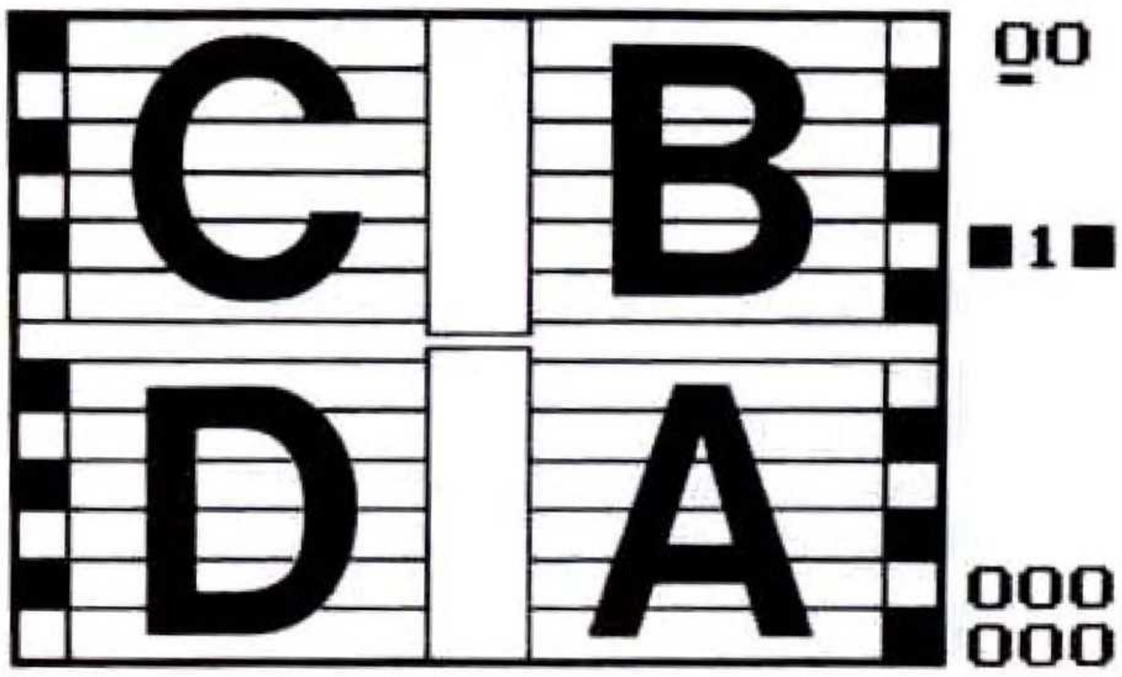
Computer against computer — see page 16

Match Backgammon for two players

(with pip counter)

RESET + 0

The Backgammon board appears on your screen.



The players are identified by the colours of their checkers, which have not yet been placed on the board here.

GREEN is operated by the right hand control.
WHITE is operated by the left hand control.

The main areas of the board have been marked on the illustration:

A = home or inner board for Green
B = outer board for Green
C = outer board for White
D = home or inner board for White

The horizontal line, through the middle, represents the "bar".

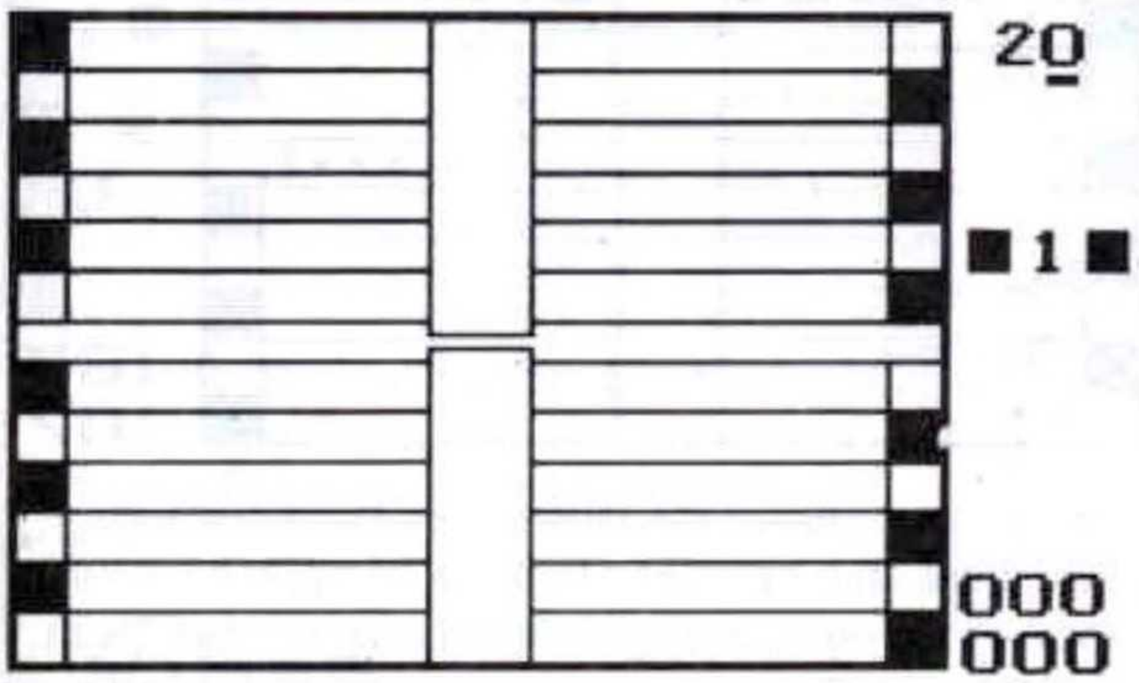
The cursor

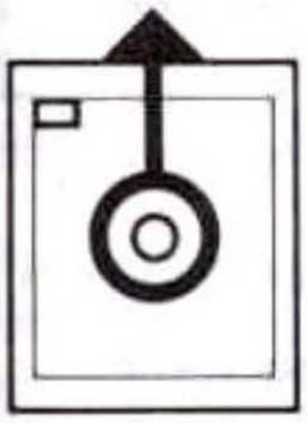
Always keep an eye on the "cursor". It will guide your way through the entire game. It tells you where the action is and whose turn it is to take the action.

It will always appear in the colour of the player whose turn it is to play.

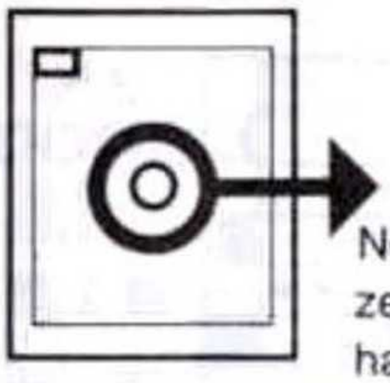
When the board appears on your screen, you see the cursor blinking under the left zero in the right-hand top corner. This is where the players first mark the agreed number of points over which the match will be played.

Let us assume the players agree to a 24 point match:



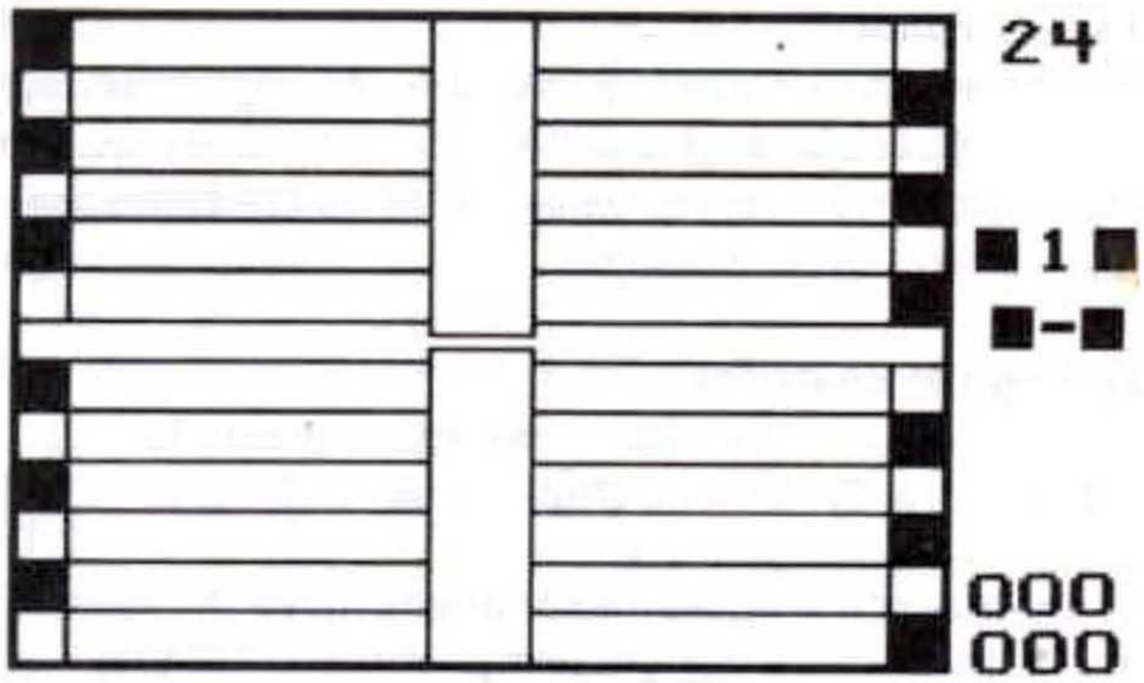


Push the joystick of either hand control forward to put the counter into operation. Release the joystick when it has reached the figure 2. If you went too far, push it forward again. It will count up to nine and start again with 0.

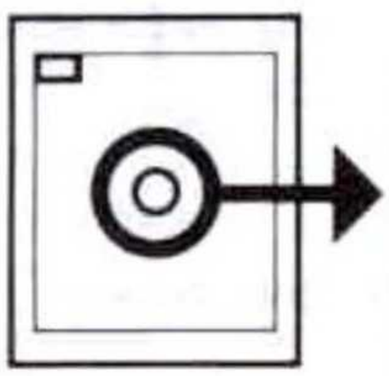


Now move the cursor to the other zero by pushing the joystick of either hand control to the right. Now repeat the same procedure again to set the counter to 4.

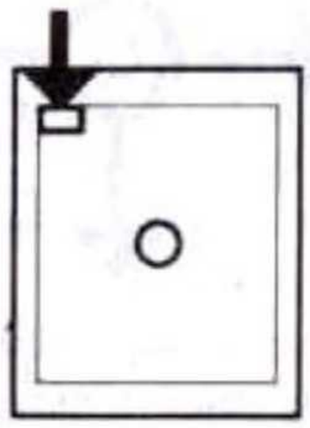
Move the joystick to the right again and the dice will appear on your screen.



You see the cursor blinking between the dice to indicate that it is time for both players to roll and determine who may start the game.

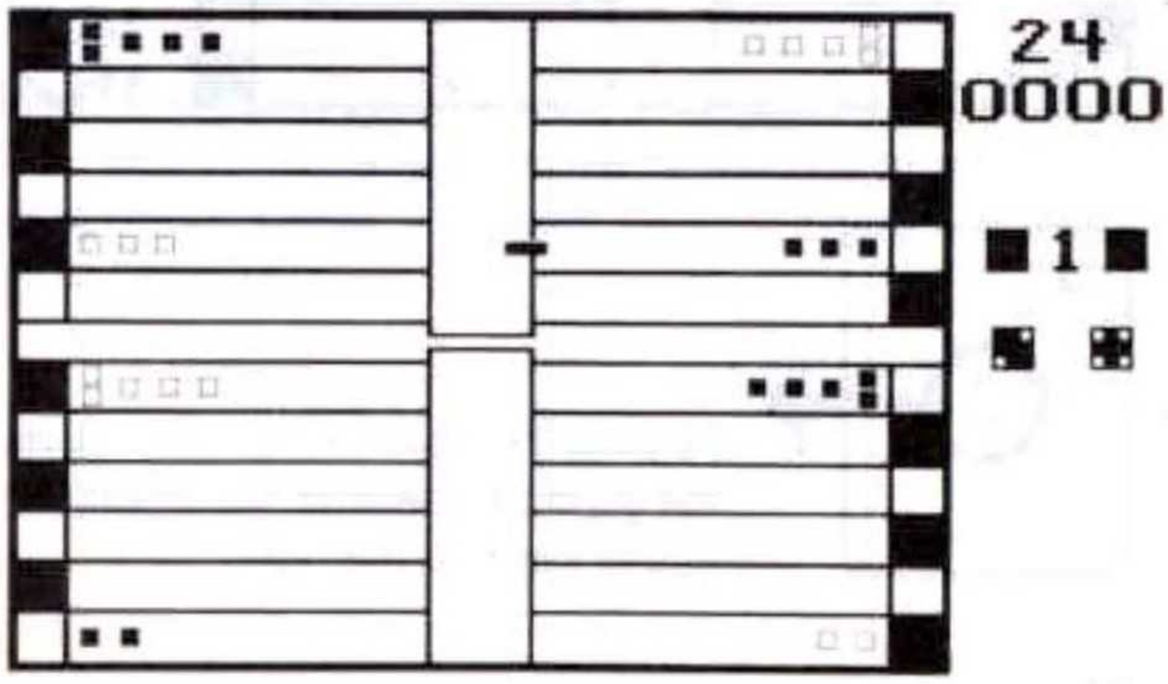


Both players now press the action buttons of their hand controls.



The die on the right turns green to indicate that it is rolling for the green player. The other die turns white.

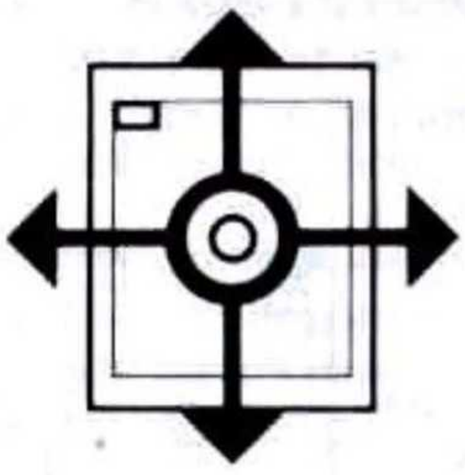
The pips scroll over the dice until they come to a stop. In our example Green has 4, while White has rolled 2. It means that Green may start the game using the 4 and the 2 to make his first move. Both dice have turned green now to indicate Green is to play.



The checkers
In the meantime, the checkers have also appeared on the board. In our diagrams the green checkers are indicated by dark spots, while the white checkers are represented by small circles.

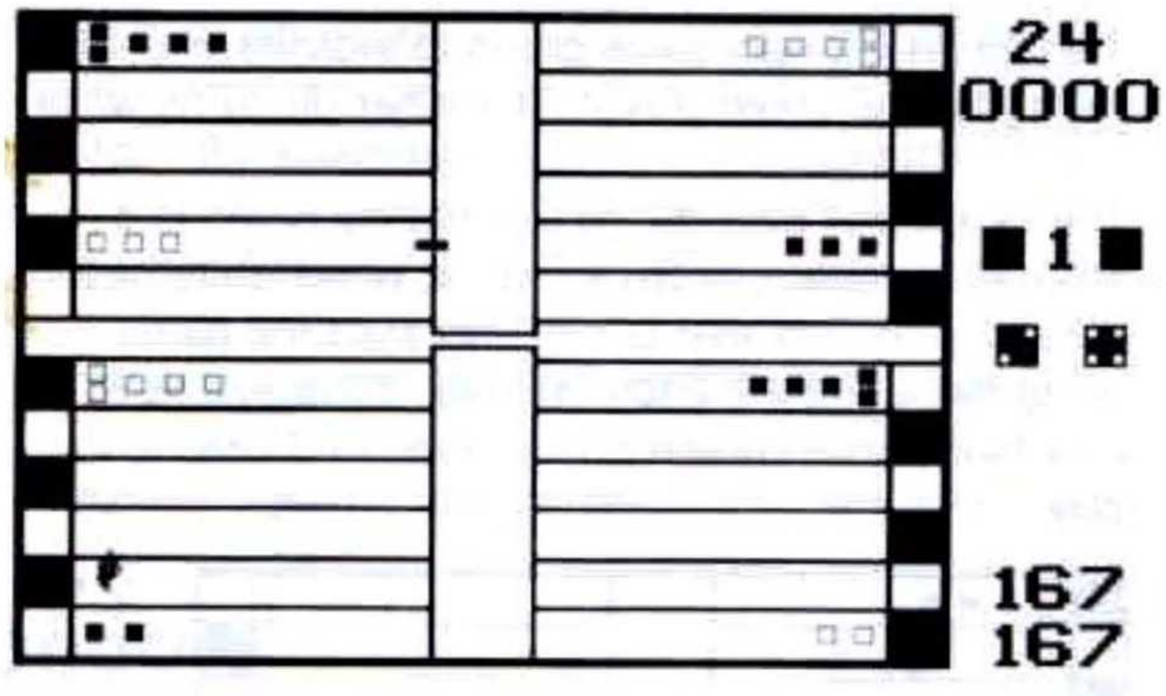
Moving the checkers
The cursor is on the board now and is green, to indicate that Green is to play.

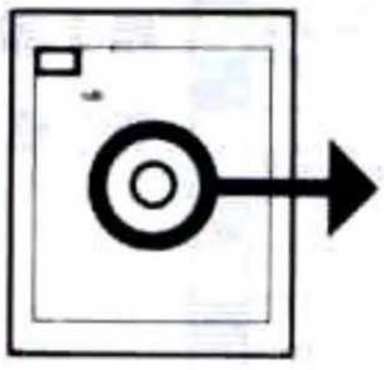
To move a checker, you first have to move the cursor to the point where the checker is you want to play.



You can move the cursor with the joystick of your hand control.

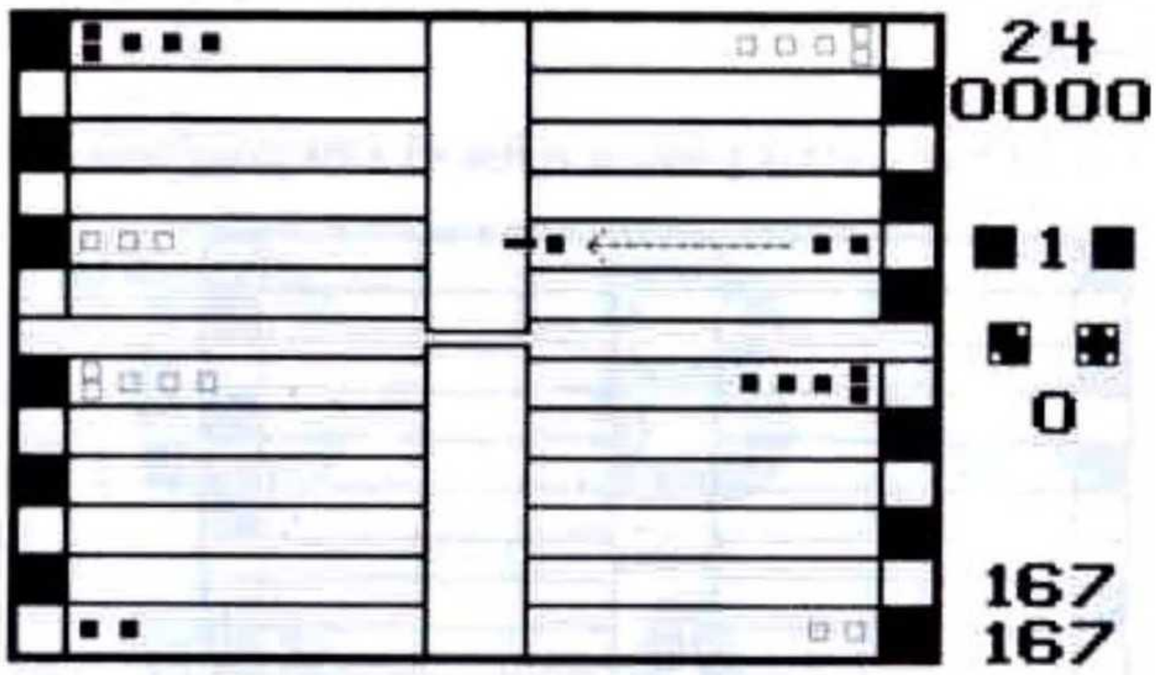
In our diagram the cursor has reached the checker we want to move.



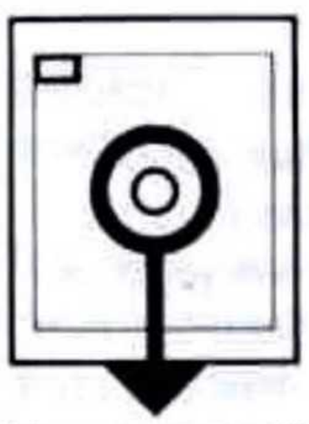


To pick the checker up, you move the joystick towards the checker. In this case to the right.

The checker has now moved towards the cursor. Green has to play towards his own home board, which means down.

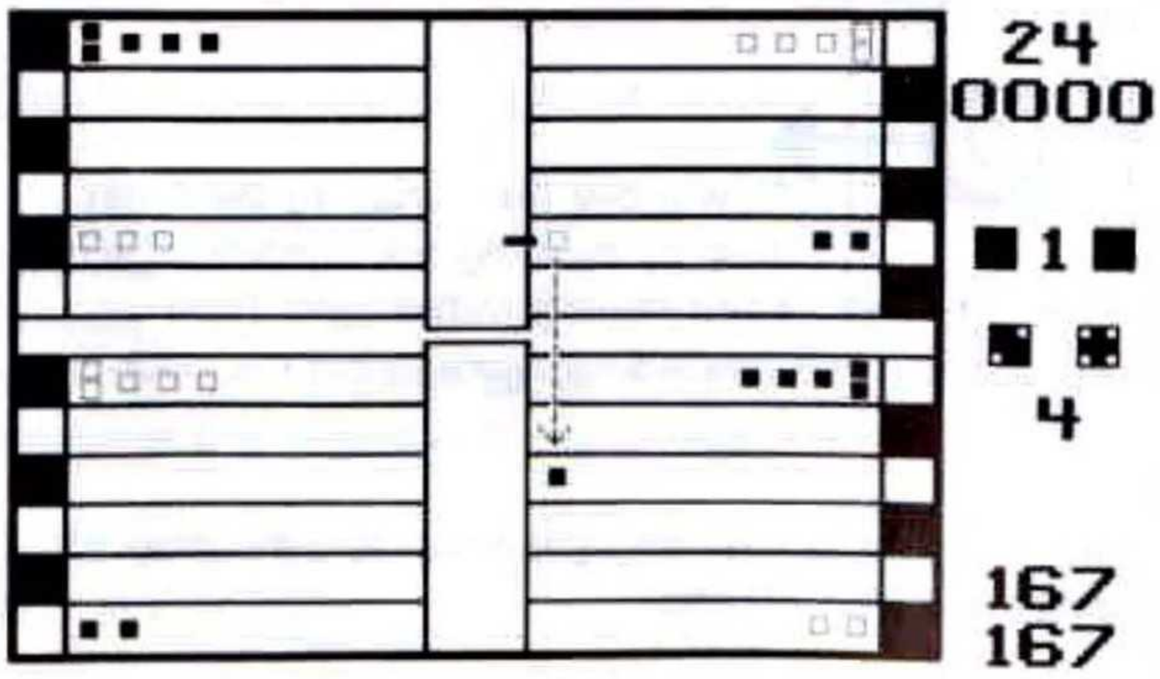


Directly underneath the dice a zero has appeared. This is the step counter. Here the computer will keep track of the number of points the checker has been moved, returning to zero when the checker has been placed. If you move your checker the wrong way or more steps than six, an "X" will appear.

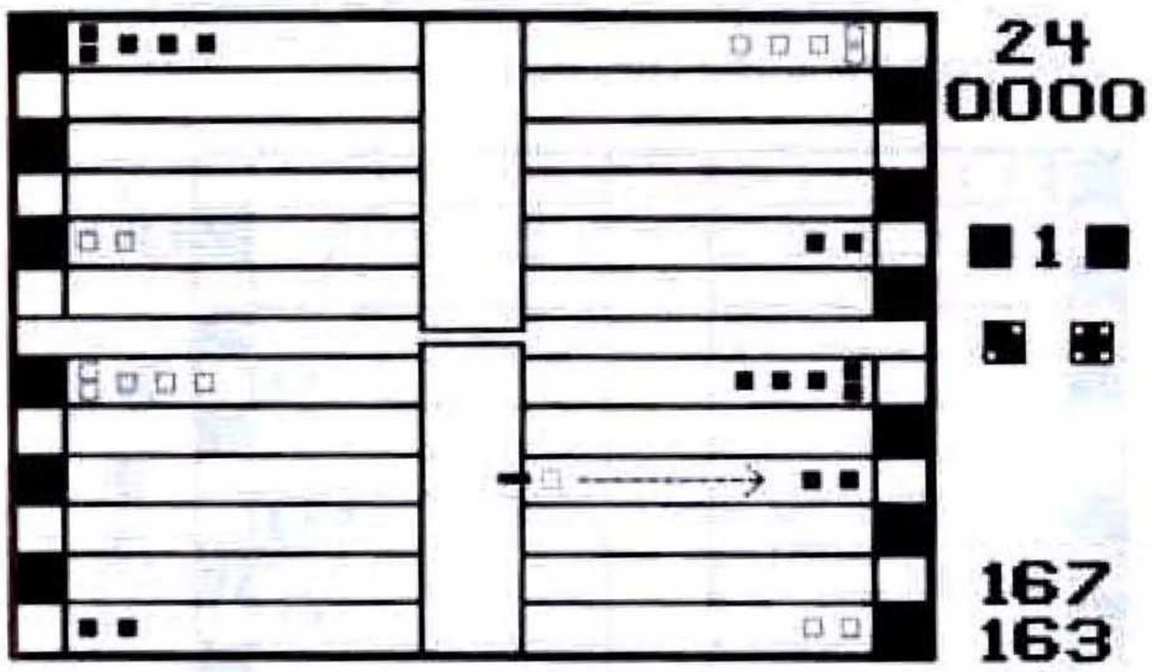


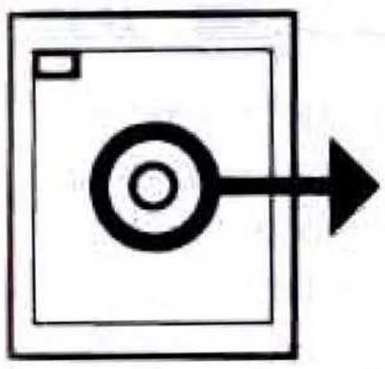
You now move the checker with the joystick. In this case going down by pulling it towards you.

The cursor will remain where it was, while the checker moves down.



The checker has been moved four points as the step counter indicates.



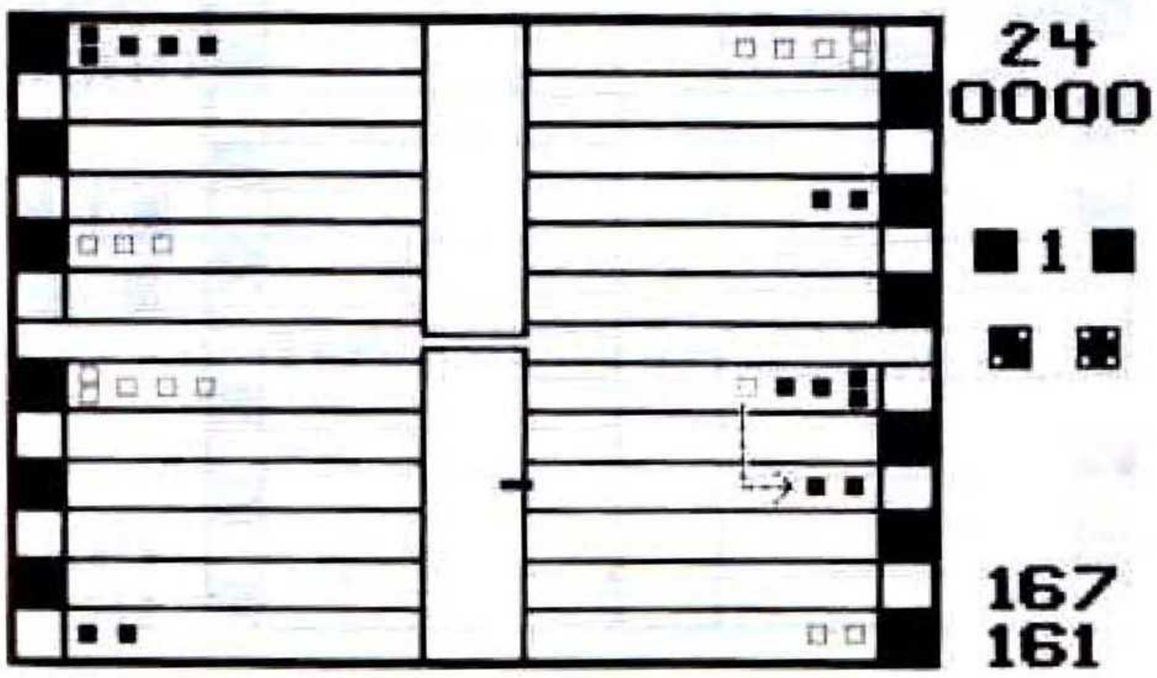


To place the checker, you move the joystick in the direction the checker has to be moved to get into the proper position. In this case to the right.

The move has now been completed. The cursor has moved to the point where the checker has been placed.

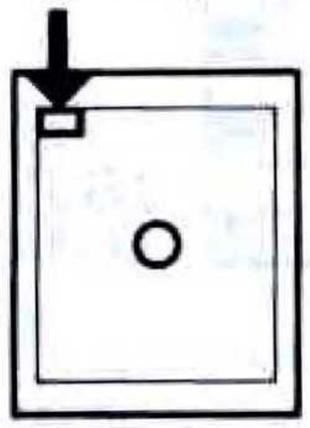
The die with four pips has lost its green colour to indicate that it has now been used. The step counter has disappeared.

Now repeat the same procedure to make your second move.

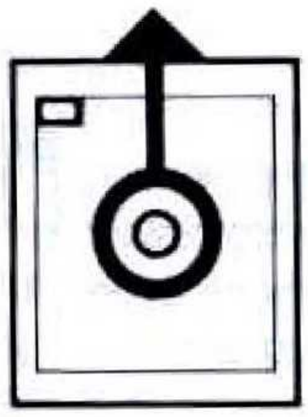


In our example, we have moved two different checkers. It is also possible of course to move one checker twice. To do that, the first move has to be completed before the checker can be picked up again for the next move.

The computer will refuse to accept illegal moves.



Retracting a move
At this stage a player can still retract his move(s) by pressing the action button.
The original situation will be restored and you can start anew.



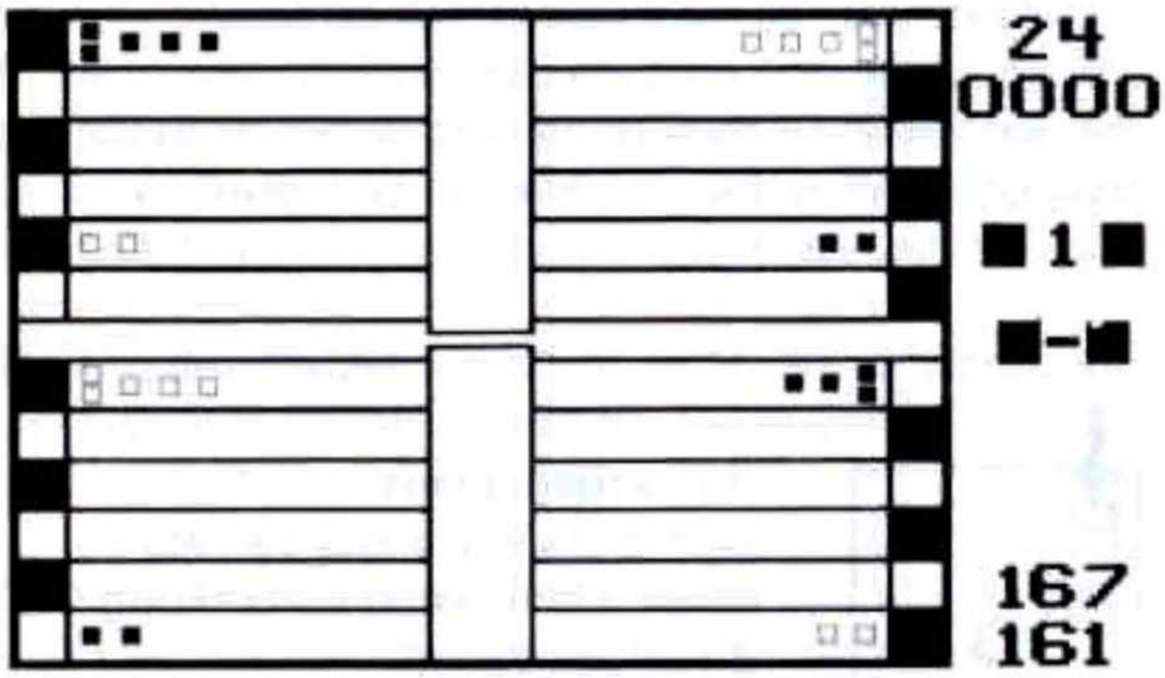
Confirming a move
If you are statisfied with the moves you have made, you confirm it by pushing the joystick forward.

Now the move can no longer be retracted.

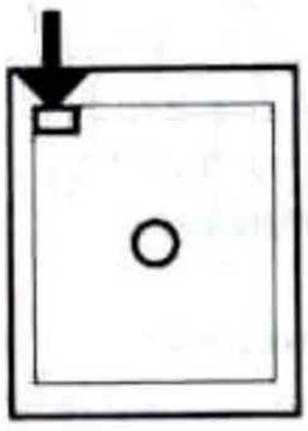
The pips have disappeared from the dice. The cursor is white now and blinking between the dice to indicate that it is White's turn to roll.

The pip counter
We have so far neglected the double counter in the right-hand bottom corner. This is the pip counter. It indicates the minimum number of pips that have to be rolled for either player to complete the game and get all his checkers off the board.

When the game started, both counters indicated 167. The green counter shows that Green has moved his checkers 6 points, which are deducted from the total (167 - 6 = 161).

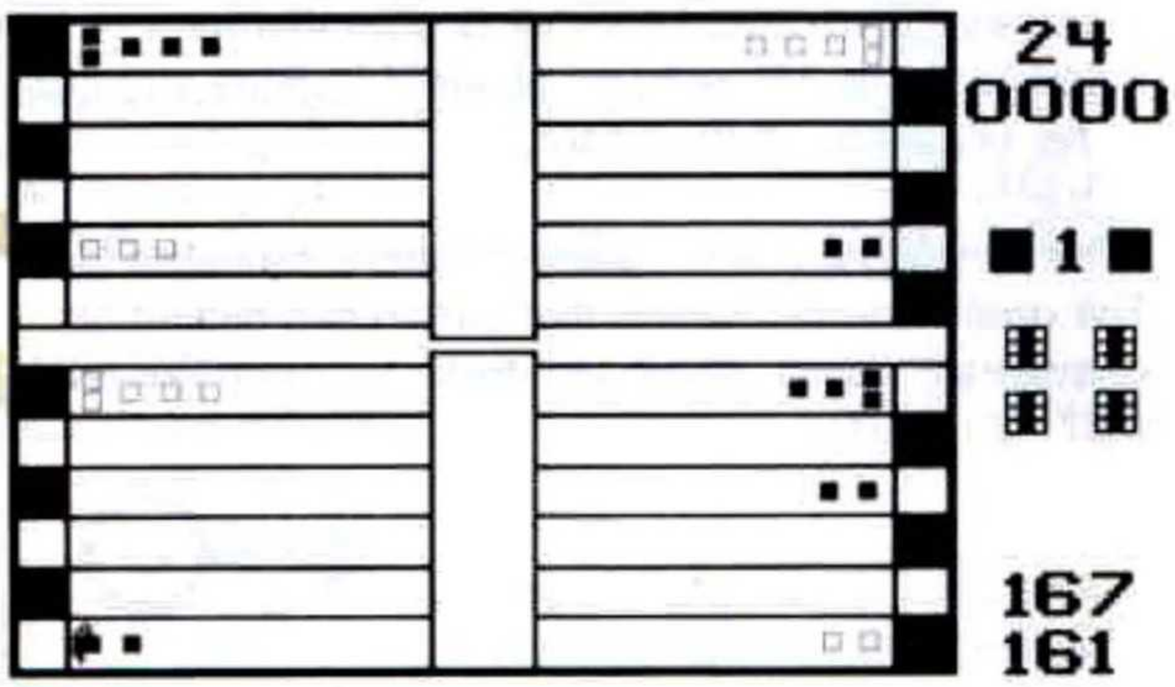


The pip counter provides you with a useful indicator of the relative strength of both players throughout the game. There are other factors involved however.

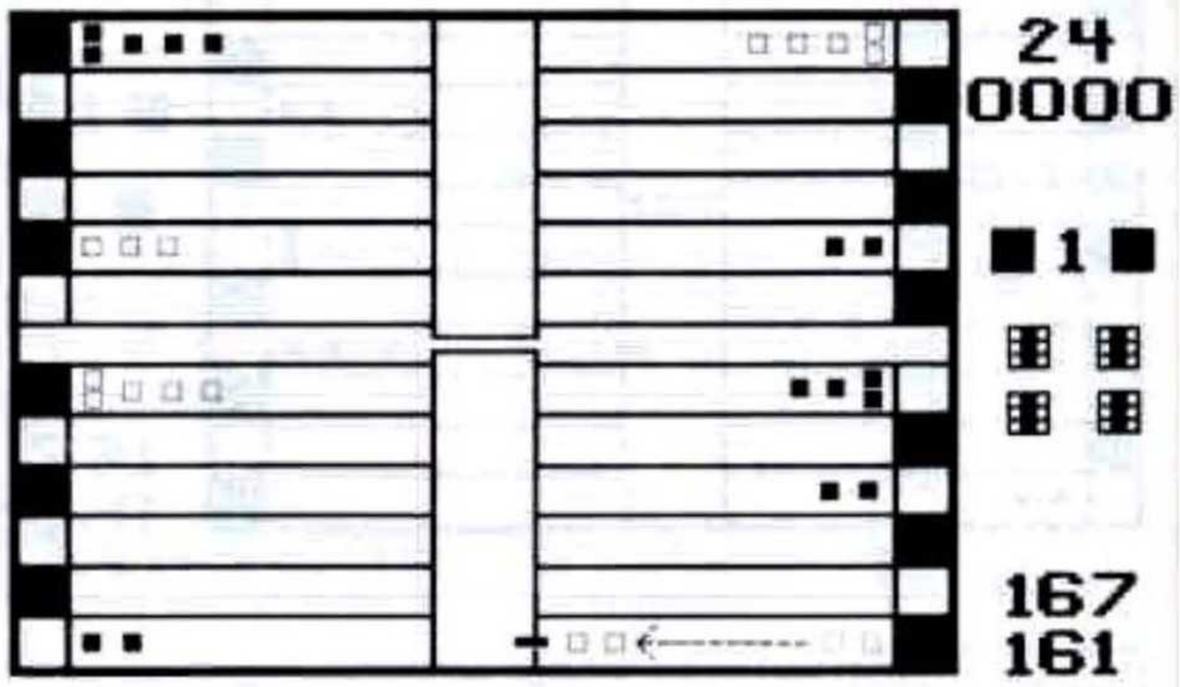


Rolling both dice
From this point on both players roll both dice. This is done by pressing the action button. In this case on the left hand control, since it is White's turn to roll.

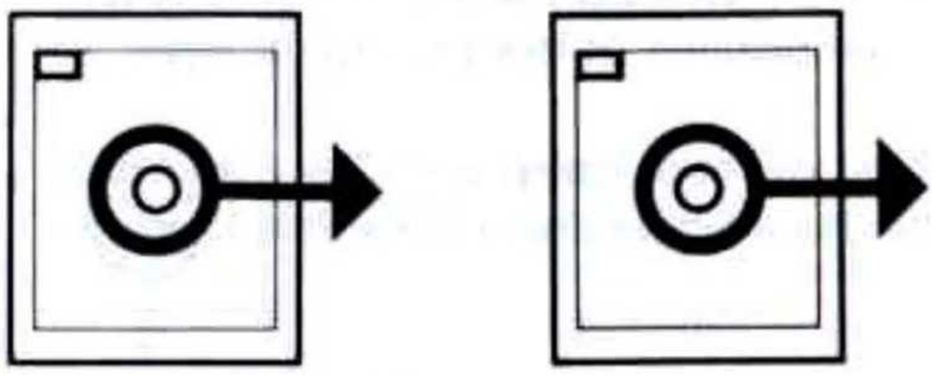
Rolling a double
White is lucky and rolls a double six! Following the official rules of Backgammon, this means that White can now make four moves.
To confirm this, the computer shows four dice, each with six pips.



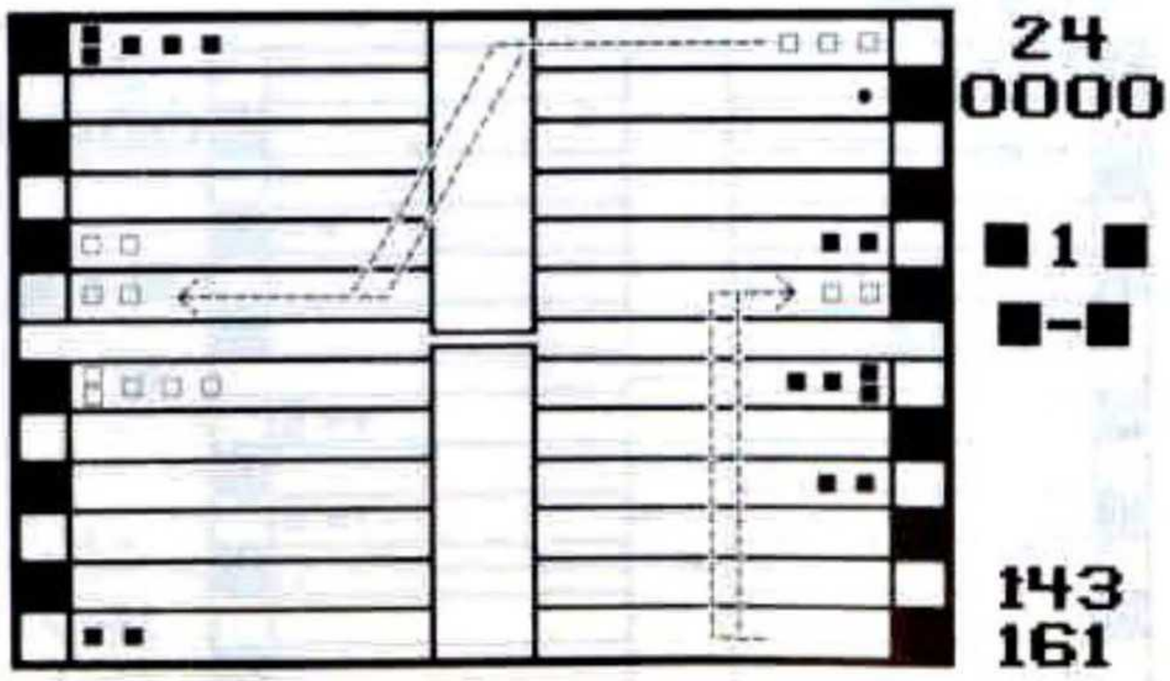
Moving two checkers simultaneously
To expedite matters a little, you may also move two checkers simultaneously, provided both checkers come from the same starting point.



The procedure is identical as if you were moving one checker with the exception that you now have to pick up and place two checkers. You therefore have to move the joystick twice, rather than once.



You may also put the checkers down on different points. In that case simply move the joystick once, when you reach the point where you want the checker.



In this diagram White has moved two checkers and two of the four dice have disappeared from the screen. The white pip counter now shows 155 (167 - 12 = 155).

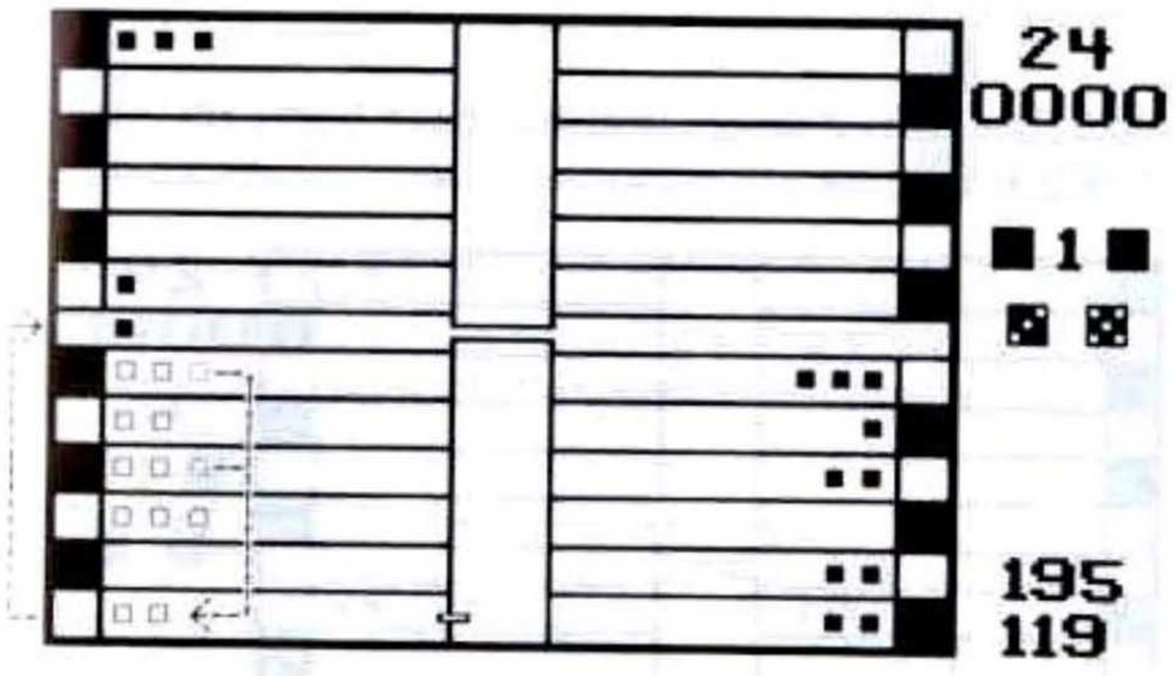
White has moved two more checkers. Here again the moves can be retracted by pressing the action button in which case all four dice will appear again on the screen, in white, and the checkers will return to their original starting position.

White has confirmed his moves and the green cursor is blinking between both dice again to indicate it is Green's turn to roll.

Hitting a checker
The game has progressed a bit and White is about to hit a green checker.

To hit a checker, you simply move your own to the same point as the (single!) opposing checker.

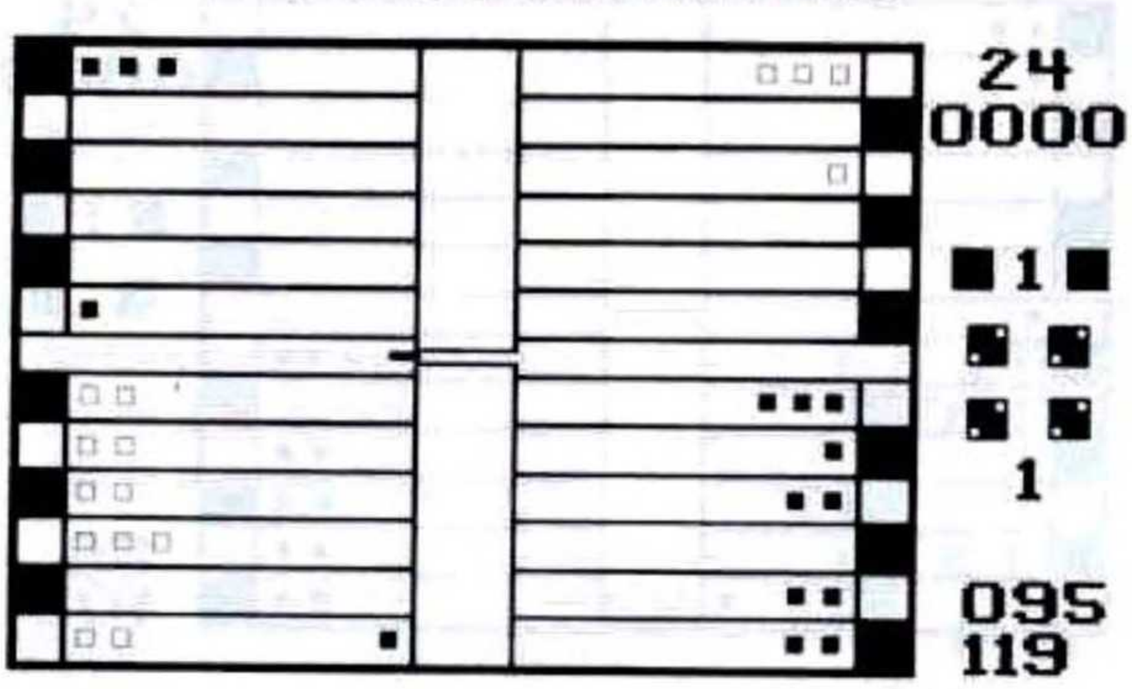
The green checker is automatically placed on the "bar".



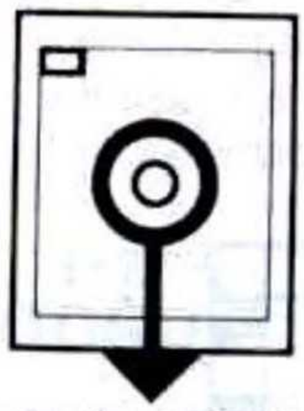
Re-entering
Following the rules of Backgammon, Green cannot continue to play until his checker has re-entered, which means in this particular case that he has to roll a 2.

If Green rolls the wrong number of pips, the computer will recognise this and both dice will lose their green colour automatically; just as if they had been used in play. Green has to confirm this by pushing the joystick forwards, just like after having made two regular moves.

Green is lucky, however, and rolls double 2.



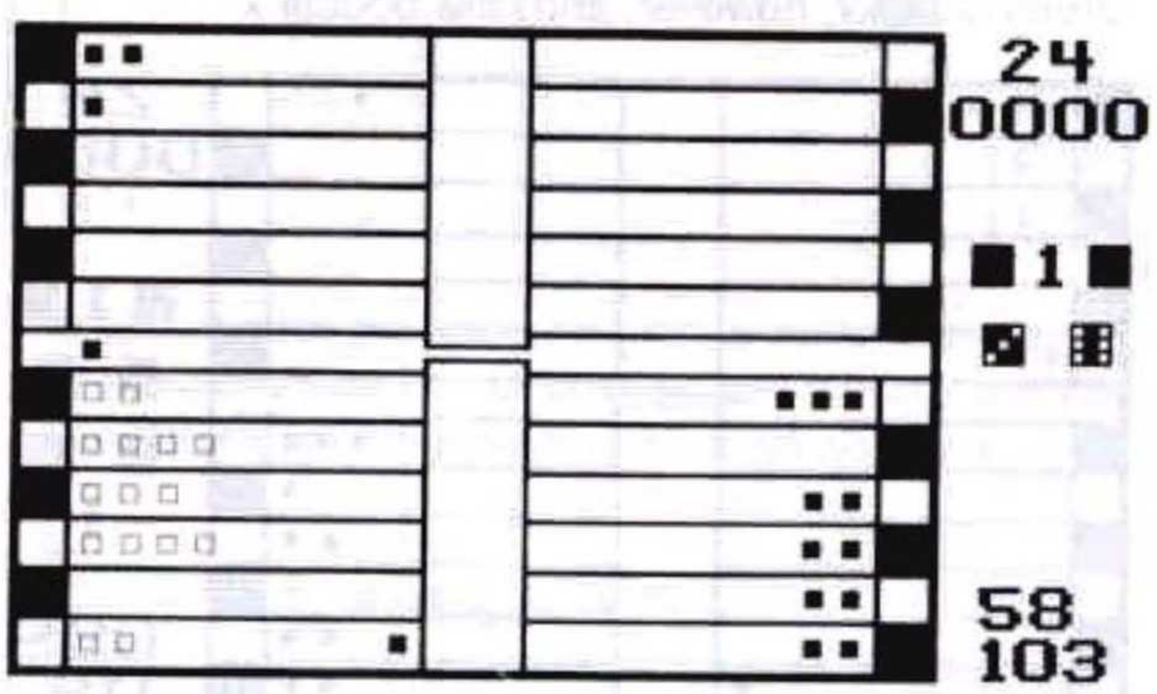
The green cursor automatically appears at the bar and the checker moves towards the cursor, ready for re-entry.



To re-enter, pull the joystick towards you. This counts as one step as the step counter indicates. Then continue as you would when making a normal move.

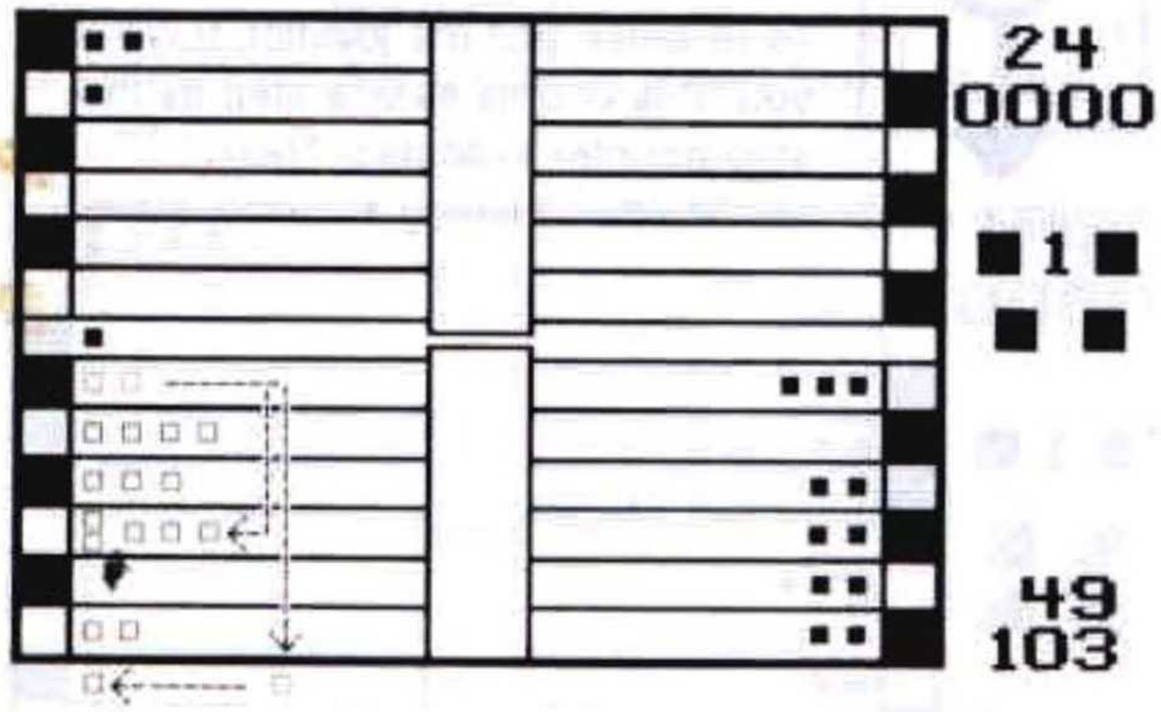
Bearing off
When all checkers have been brought into the home board of a player, he can start removing them from the board, one by one.

Here, White has all checkers on his home board and can start bearing off.

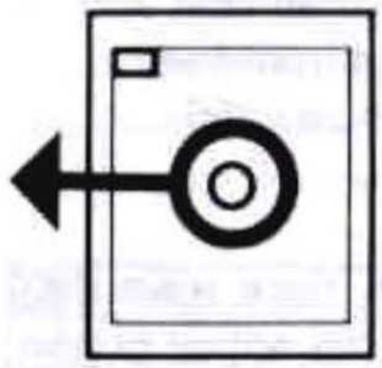


He has rolled 6-3, but has to be careful not to be hit by the re-entering green checker! (Still sitting on the bar here).

Here again the compute will only allow legal moves, which means that it would not be possible to use the six to bear off one of the lower placed checkers.

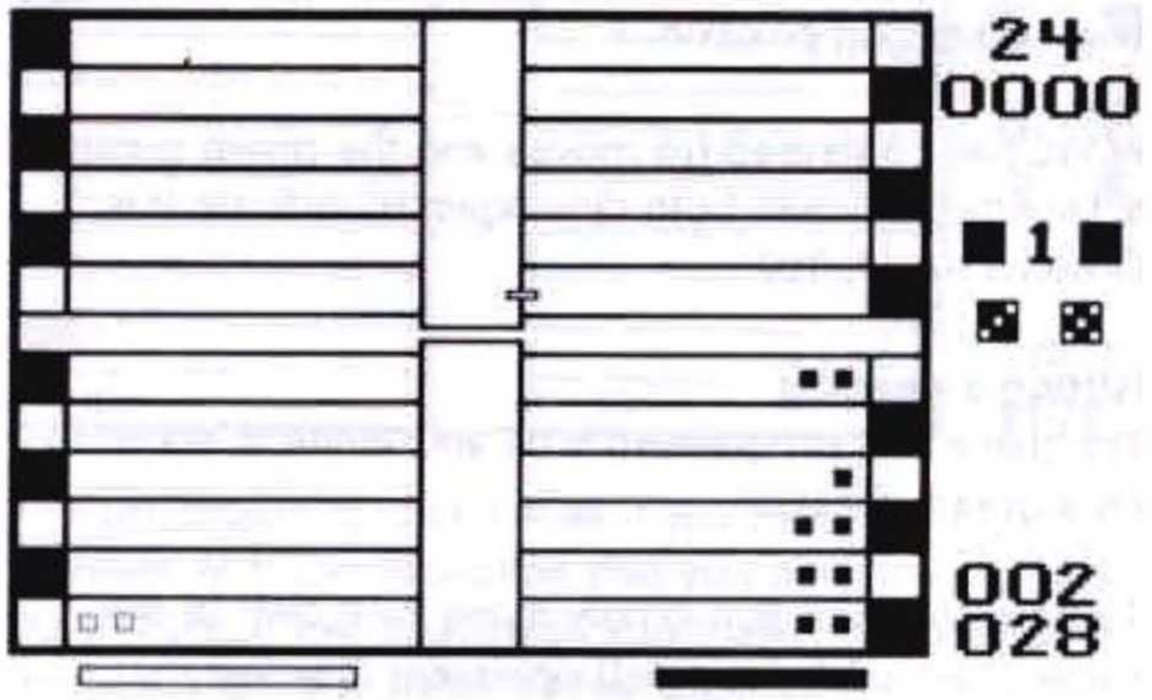


To bear a checker off, you simply follow the same procedure as when making a normal move.



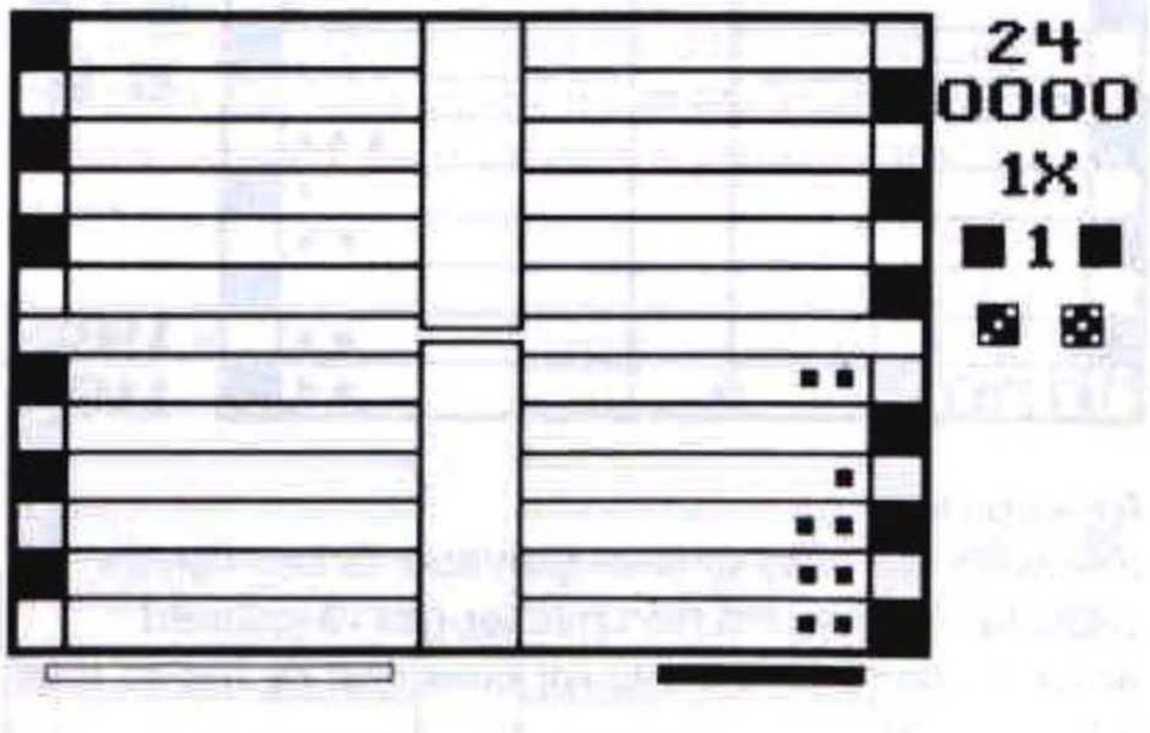
When the checker has passed the bottom line, White has to move the joystick to the left.

White is about to win this game.



The white pip counter indicates that he only needs two pips to finish the game, while Green still requires 28 steps. He does have all his checkers on his home board however.

When the last white checker has been borne off, the first game is over.

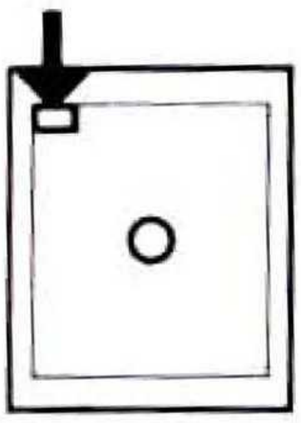


A "1x" signal flashes in the right-hand top corner in white to indicate that White has won. The "1" means that it was a regular game and White did not win a Gammon or Backgammon. In that case the computer

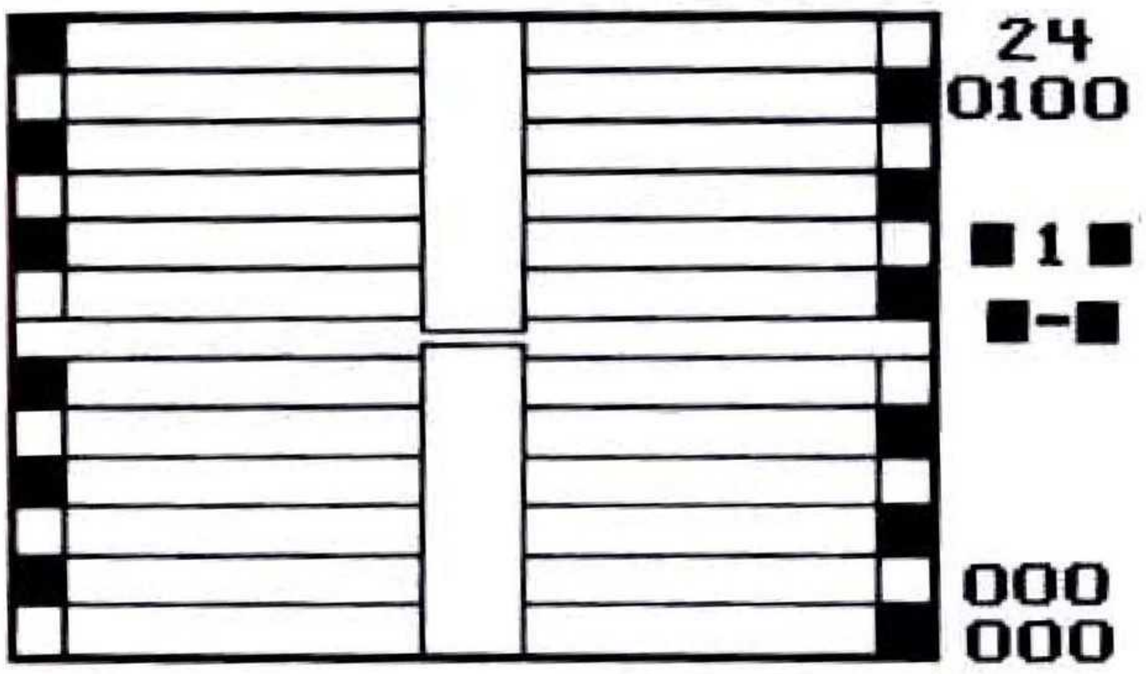
would have shown "2x" or "3x" respectively.

An electronic sound signal pays tribute to the winner.

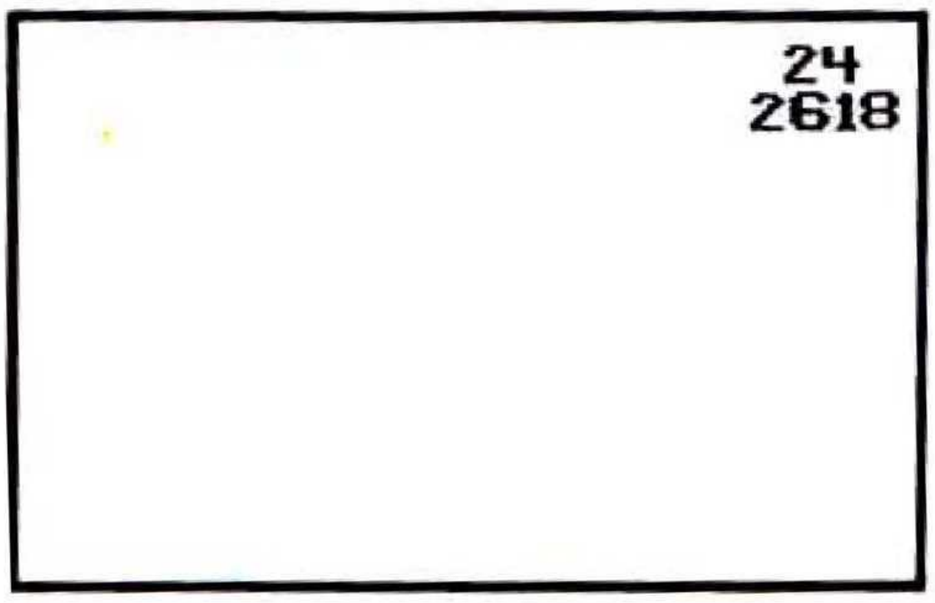
The next game
The "1x" signal and the electronic fanfare will remain until either player presses the action button of his hand control.



The match counter indicates that White has won his first game in the match.



All checkers have disappeared from the board. The pip counter has returned to zero. Everything is ready for the next game. Both players press their action button to see who is to start.

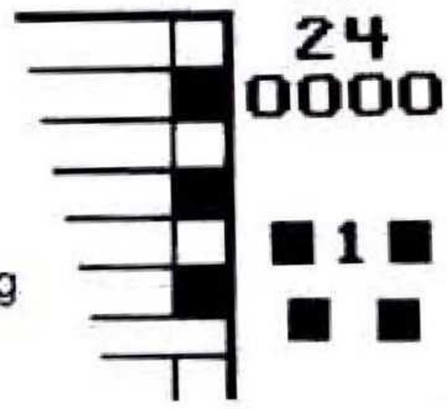


The end of the match
Winner in this particular case is the player, who is first to reach 24 points (or more). In that case the entire screen will flash up in various bright colours, while an electronic "fanfare" souns. It does not last very long and then the screen turns dark, only showing the winning score in the top right-hand corner.

Next match
To start a new match, first press "RESET" and start as described in these instructions.

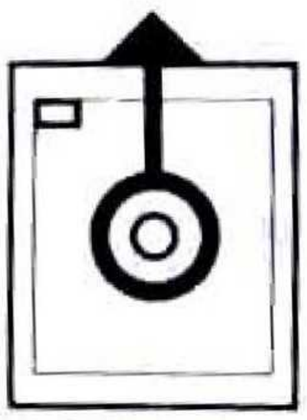
Doubling and re-doubling
Doubling plays an important part in a good game of Backgammon.

We have so far ignored the "1", flanked by two cubes. This is the "doubling cube".



The "1" will remain there as long as neither player has doubled.

Both players can take the initiative to double. However, you can only do this when it's your turn to play and before you roll your dice.



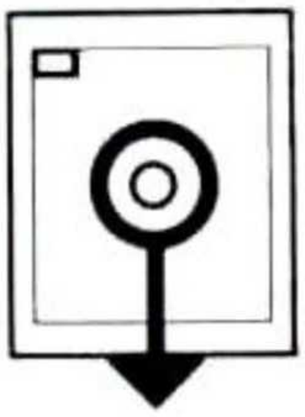
To double, push the joystick forward.

The "1" will be replaced by a "2" and the cursor appears under the "2" in the colour of the player who has challenged his opponent for a double.

You can retract your doubling challenge by pulling the joystick towards you, but you can only do this if your opponent has not yet accepted the challenge!

The opponent can either accept the double or pass.

Accepting a doubling challenge



To accept a doubling challenge, pull the joystick towards you.

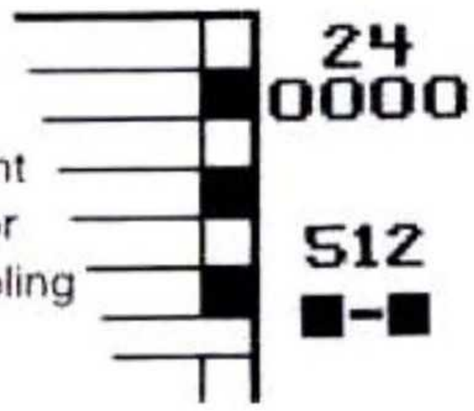
The doubling cube now shows a "2", and will assume the colour of the player who has just accepted the double to indicate that it is his privilege now to re-double, if and when he feels like it. Here again, the player has to wait for his turn and re-double before rolling his dice.

The re-doubling challenge can also be retracted by pulling the joystick towards you if your opponent has not yet accepted the challenge.

Both players can thus take turns doubling.

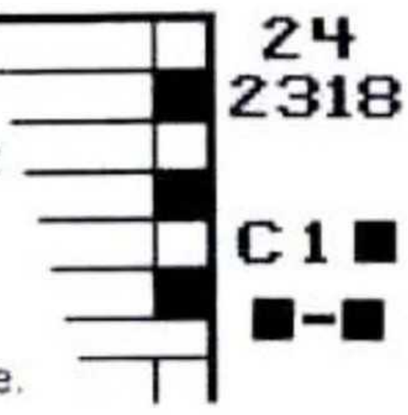
The maximum doubling rate with Videopac Backgammon is 512! (1 - 2 - 4 - 8 -16 - 32, etc.).

The final score of a game is determined by multiplying the basic score (1 for a straight game, 2 for a Gammon or 3 for a Backgammon) with the doubling rate shown on the screen at the end of the game.



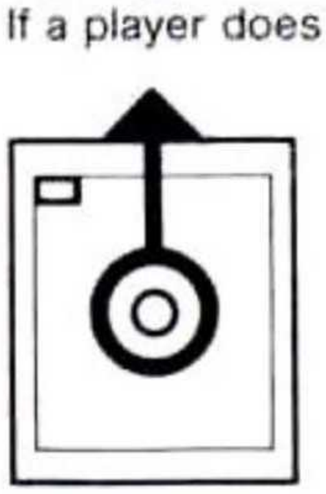
The Crawford rule

Videopac also recognises the Crawford rule, which means that no doubling is allowed during **one** game when either player is within one point of winning the match at the start of a new game. In that case a red "C" will appear in the doubling cube.



Passing

If a player does not feel like accepting a doubling or re-doubling challenge, he pushes the joystick forward and "passes".



In that case he has lost the game. The end score of the game is determined by multiplying the basic score (straight, Gammon or Backgammon) with the doubling rate indicated in the cube before the challenge.

Asking the computer for assistance

If you are in a difficult situation, you can call on the computer for assistance for one move.

First roll your dice.

Next press YES and finally press your action button. The computer will then move the checkers for you. for one move only!

If you do not agree, simply press the action button again. The original situation is restored and you are free to choose another move.

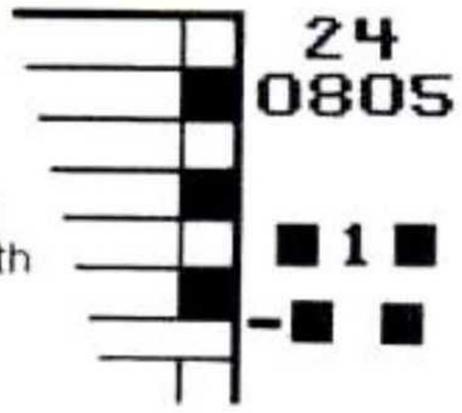
Using hand dice

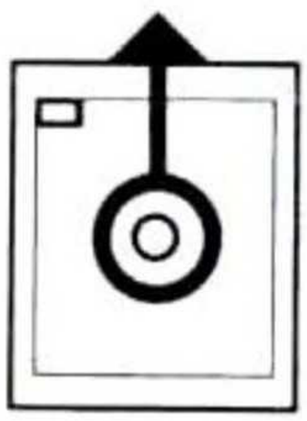
If for some reason you prefer not to use the electronic computer dice, you can also play the game using hand dice.

First select the game you want to play by pressing RESET, followed by the numerical key indicating the game variety.

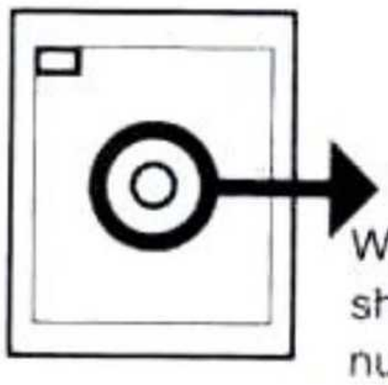
Next press X.
Then proceed as you normally would.

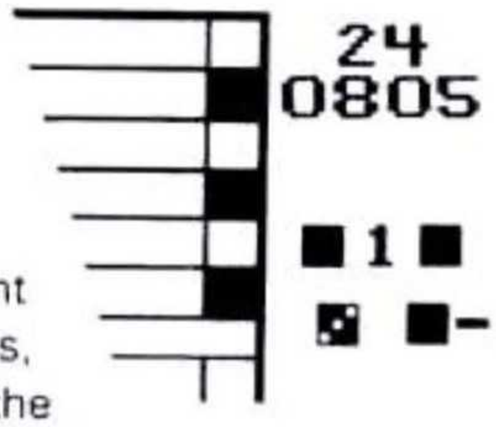
In this case the cursor will first appear to the left of the dice. This indicates that White (left hand control) can introduce the number of pips he has rolled with his die.



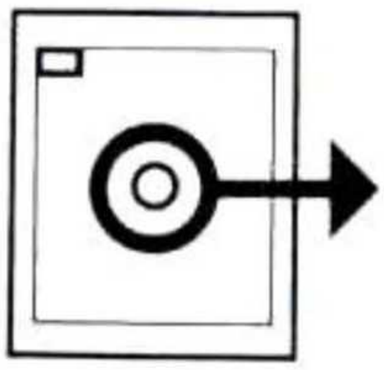


Move the joystick forward until the die shows the number of pips you have rolled with your hand die. The pips will go up to six, after which they return to one, running up to six again etc.





When the die shows the right number of pips, White moves the joystick of his hand control to the right.
The cursor will then move to the right of the other die to indicate that it is up to Green now to roll and bring the pips he has rolled onto his die.



When this has been completed, Green moves his joystick to the right. The cursor will be transferred to the board and both dice will assume the colour of the player with the highest number of pips and the game can start.

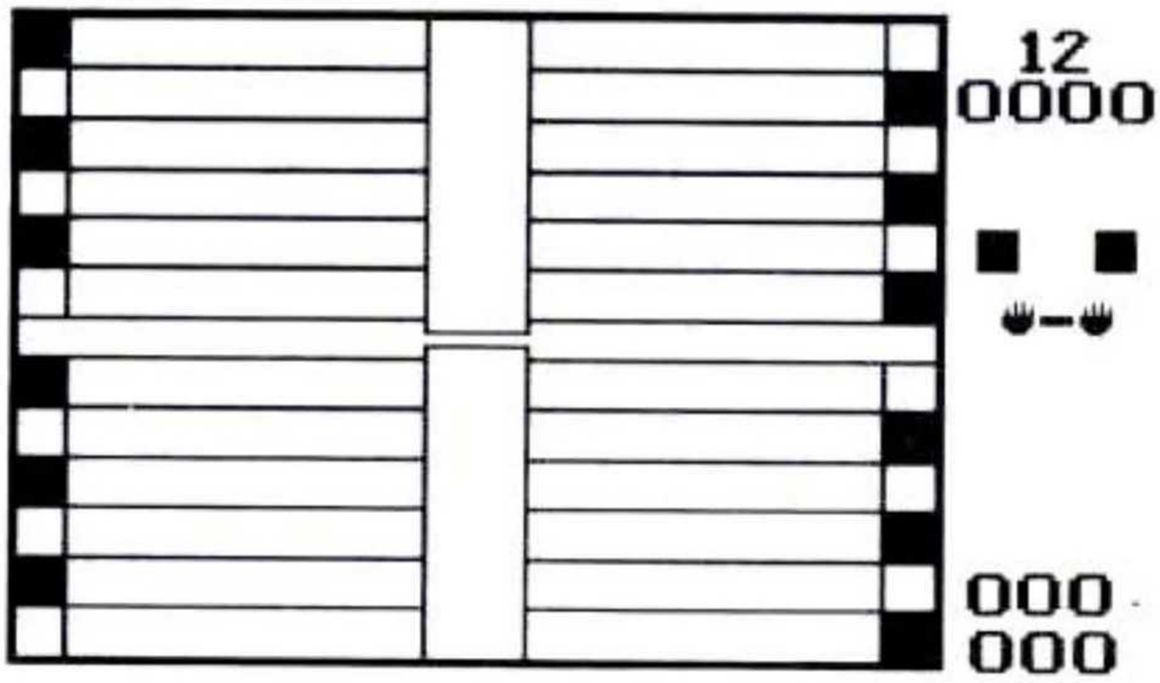
Both players now follow basically the same procedure when the game continues. When a move has been executed and confirmed, the cursor will move to the dice. First introduce the proper number of pips on the left die, next on the right die, then move the joystick to the right etc.

Setting up a given starting position
It can be very interesting for serious students of the game of Backgammon to replay a game from a given starting position to see whether a different type of end play for instance would have led to a better result. This requires setting up a given starting position.

First select the game you want to play by first pressing [RESET] and next the appropriate numerical key [0] / [7].

Then press key [+]

- When playing "Competitive Backgammon" (RESET and either key [2] or [3]), the dice will be replaced immediately by two little hands.



- When playing "Match Backgammon" (RESET followed by either [0] or [1]), you will first have to set your match target before the two little hands appear.

Next press the action button of either hand control and the two hands will assume the corresponding colour.

Assuming that you have pressed the action button of the left hand control, the hands will turn white to indicate that two white checkers can now be moved.

The checkers are moved just as in a normal game, with some interesting and practical exceptions:

- You may move the checkers any number of points you want.

- You can move the checkers in either direction.

Having moved two white checkers, the hands turn green after you have confirmed the moves, to indicate that you may now move two green checkers. This continues until you have moved all checkers into their required positions.

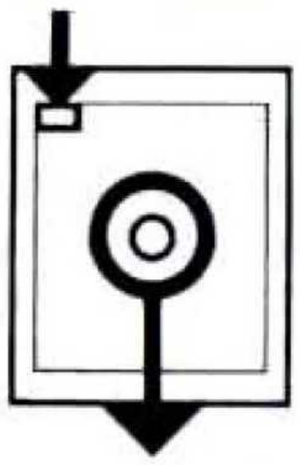
You must keep in mind, however, that you always have to complete all moves allowed by the computer for both players, which means:

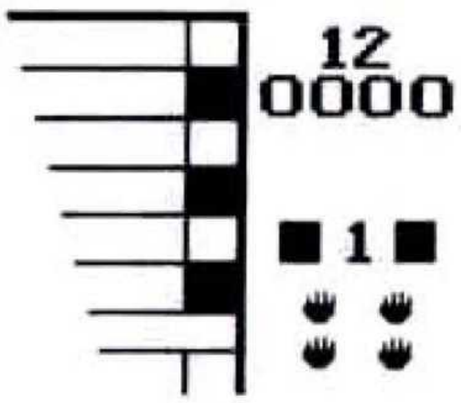
- If you can reach the required position with only one more move, you will have to complete it in two. Just watch the colours of the little hands!

- If you have reached the required position for one of the players, while the other has not yet been completed, you may have to make some fake moves, for instance by moving one checker back and forth before you can move the checkers for the other player again.

When you have set up the position you want, wait until the cursor appears between the two little hands. Then press [÷] again and the game will continue in the originally selected mode.

You can expedite matters a little by moving four checkers, rather than just two every time. To do this you first press the action button. Keep it pressed while you pull the joystick towards you. Four little hands then will appear to indicate that you can now move four checkers.



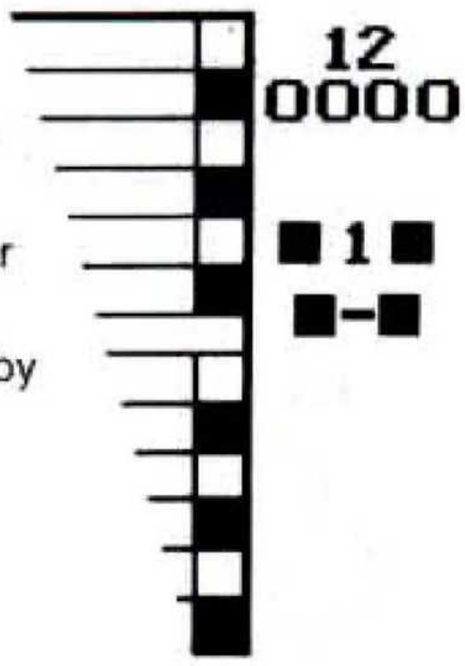


Match Backgammon for two players

(without pip counter)

[RESET] + [1]

The game is identical to Match Backgammon for two players with pip counter. With this variety, however, the pip counter will not appear on your screen. You may at any time make the pip counter appear by pressing key [0].
If you press key [1], it will disappear again.

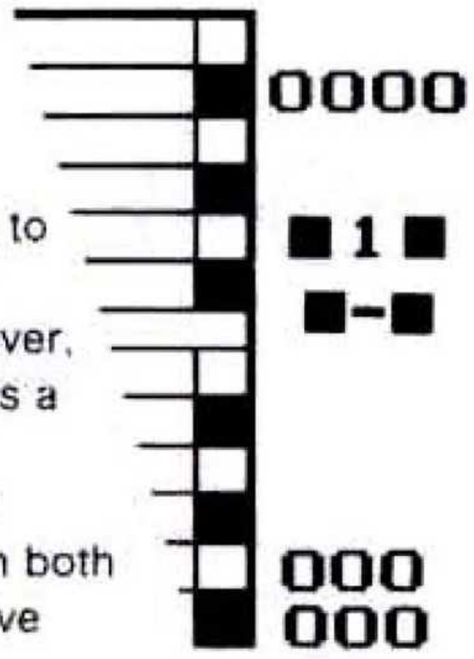


Competitive Backgammon for two players

(with pip counter)

[RESET] + [2]

The game is played according to the same rules as Match Backgammon. This time, however, the players do not play towards a predetermined match target. Instead, the computer gives a record of the balance between both players and the points they have scored.
Match target and game counter are replaced by a four-digit indicator of the balance. The colour indicates in whose favour the balance is.
The maximum balance, registered by the computer, is 9999 points.

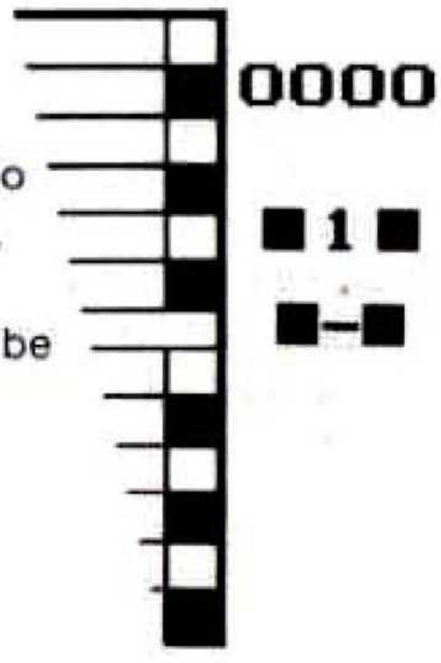


Competitive Backgammon for two players

(without pip counter)

[RESET] + [3]

This game is basically identical to the preceding variety. This time, however, the pip counter is eliminated. The pip counter can be made visible, however, by pressing key [2] etc.



Match Backgammon for one player, playing against the computer

(with pip counter)

RESET + 4

The game is basically identical to the first version, Match Backgammon for two. This time, however, the computer plays the white checkers, while its opponent - presumably you - plays with green, using the right hand control.

Match Backgammon for one player, playing against the computer

(without pip counter)

RESET + 5

Identical to the preceding version, however, this time without pip counter. The pip counter can be made visible any time by pressing key 4. It will disappear again when you press key 5.

Competitive Backgammon for one player, playing against the computer

(with pip counter)

RESET + 6

Basically identical to the game for two players. The computer now plays the white checkers. You operate the right hand control.

Competitive Backgammon for one player, playing against the computer

(without pip counter)

RESET + 7

Basically identical to the version for two players. Challenger plays with green checkers, using right hand control.

"Dutch" Backgammon

RESET + 1 / 7 + –

This game variety, also known as "Russian Backgammon", does not open with the traditional starting position of the checkers. Instead all checkers are on the bar and have to be brought onto the board, the same as with re-entering.
The players can only start their advance towards their home boards after all their checkers have been entered onto the board.

Computer against computer

RESET + 6 / 7 + NO

This provides you with a fascinating way to study the game! You simply sit back, see how the dice are rolled and how the computer makes its moves!

If you run into an interesting game situation while watching the computer play, you can take over at any time, for green by pressing NO again. The computer will first complete its current move and then switch over to its original mode (1 player against computer).

Ask your dealer about the other Videopac cartridges that have been issued so far:

1. Race
   Spin-out
   Cryptogram
2. Pairs
   Space rendezvous
   Logic
3. American Football
4. Air-sea war
   Battle
5. Blackjack
6. Tenpin Bowling
   Basketball
7. Mathematician
   Echo
8. Baseball
9. Computer Programmer
10. Golf
11. Cosmic Conflict
12. Take the Money and Run
13. Playschool Math
14. Gunfighter
15. Samurai
16. Depth Charge
    Marksman
17. Chinese Logic
18. Laser War
19. Catch the Ball
    Noughts and Crosses
20. Stone Sling
21. Secret of the Pharaohs
22. Space Monster
23. Las Vegas Gambling
24. Flipper Game
25. Skiing
26. Basket Game
27. Electronic Table Football
28. Electronic Volleyball
29. Dam Buster
30. Battlefield
31. Musician
32. Labyrinth Game
    Supermind
33. Jumping Acrobats
34. Satellite Attack
35. Electronic Billiards
36. Electronic Soccer
    Electronic Ice Hockey
37. Monkeyshines
38. Munchkin
39. Freedom Fighters
40. 4 in 1 Row
41. Conquest of the World
42. Quest for the Rings
43. Pickaxe Pete
44. Crazy Chase
45. Morse
46. The Great Wall Street Fortune Hunt
47. The Mousing Cat

C7010. Chess module

A. Newscaster

Printed in France
Copyright protection is claimed
on the program stored within
the cartridge
© 1982 Philips Export B.V.

S.A. PHILIPS INDUSTRIELLE ET COMMERCIALE
Société Anonyme au capital de 200.000.000 F
50, avenue Montaigne, 75380 PARIS CEDEX 08
R.C.S. PARIS B 622 051 738
3111 176 17110 Imp. Martinenq, Ivry

PHILIPS